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J. Y. Simpson

MEMOIR

OF

SIR JAMES Y. SIMPSON, BART.

M.D., D.C.L. OXON.

ONE OF HER MAJESTY'S PHYSICIANS FOR SCOTLAND,

PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE AND MIDWIFERY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,

FOREIGN MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIES OF MEDICINE OF FRANCE,

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BY

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EDINBURGH

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1873.

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PREFACE.

When asked by the family and trustees of Sir James Simpson to write his Life, I agreed with much reluctance. The retrospect of many years' close friendship and familiarity with Sir James inclined me to the task. But it also deepened my sense of its importance and difficulty. It seemed to me almost impossible to describe his devotion to his profession, his large-hearted philanthropy, and great attainments in literature and science, so that the description might become a mirror in which, without injustice to him, the image of even my own ideal of his inner life and public work might be seen by others. The attempt has been made to sketch, at least in full and unbroken outline, the life of a remarkable man. Having undertaken the work, it is useless to apologize to the reader for its imperfections, or even to deprecate criticism on the plea of its difficulty. I have, however, an oppressive sense of anxiety, lest the biographer's shortcomings have in any way marred the faithfulness of the

portrait he has lovingly and truthfully tried to produce. Had this Preface been written before the work was begun, it would have been stated that any opinion or judgment of my own relative to the incidents recorded in the narrative would be irrelevant. But, as the work progressed, it was found impossible to avoid this, because in several instances I did not agree with Sir James's estimate of some of his distinguished fellow-workers, or of the merits of certain controversies. It has always seemed to me unfair to expect a biographer to conceal his own opinions, in deference to artificial and arbitrary canons held to limit his liberty in writings of this sort.

A persistent effort has been made to let Sir James be, in a great measure, his own biographer. I have contented myself with piecing illustrative documents together, and leaving them to tell their own tale. The materials put into my hand were so abundant that selection has been a formidable difficulty. Few communications to Sir James from practitioners or patients, friends or distinguished men, were destroyed. Copies were generally kept of his own letters on important private or public affairs. His letters to his elder brother, and, when from home, to his family circle, were numerous. They were nearly all preserved. The other letters, thousands in number, were

put up in bundles, without respect to date or subject, and stowed away. It has been necessary to glance at them singly, because, in the unavoidable haste to overtake the work laid to his hand or forced upon him, Sir James often thrust two or three notes into one envelope, and, not unfrequently, very interesting and important letters found a place with others containing only very commonplace details of

"Man's love of life, his weakness, and his pains."

In some instances, notes of no value in themselves have had a place assigned to them in the narrative, because they help to indicate Sir James's relations to men or circumstances that had important bearings on his character and work.

My own training and studies enable me in some degree to understand and appreciate Sir James's work as a physician and man of science, but I have of purpose avoided details in this department. They would have been out of place in a biography intended for general reading.

It seemed to me in the outset that the narrative of Sir James's Christian life would be the easiest part of my task. But this has not been the case. After 1861 it became his highest aim and ambition to commend to others, in public and in private, the Saviour in whom he had found joy, peace, and all

good hope. And, in describing Sir James's religious history, I have had a constant fear lest it should be presented in any way calculated to repel fellow-workers in science, or men of general culture, from the careful consideration of that "birth of the Spirit," and that "sacrifice of reasonable service unto God," into which he earnestly longed to lead all.

New College, Edinburgh,
May 1873.

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MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

Birth and Parentage—Ancestors—The Working Farmer's household—David Simpson's family—Superstition—Pedigree—Bathgate—Its Physical Features and Antiquities—Schools—First visit to Edinburgh—Archæological Tastes.

JAMES YOUNG SIMPSON was the seventh son and eighth child of David Simpson and Mary Jarvey, and was born at Bathgate, in Linlithgowshire, on June 7, 1811.

His ancestors, who had long resided at Winchburgh, in the same county, were small farmers, a class at one time of more weight in lowland Scotland than now. The industry, intelligence, and religious earnestness that found expression in the management of the working farmer's household, were well fitted to awaken and foster all manly qualities. Each member was early called to assist in the work of the farm. Habits of diligence and self-reliance were formed in boyhood which became persistent through life, and often secured for their possessors high place in the Church, at the Bar, in Medicine, or in Commerce. As it was not unusual for one family to hold the same farm for three or four generations, feelings akin to those of ownership itself were called into play. And when, as in the case of James Simpson's father, a son left the farm for other work, his early training bore its characteristic fruits.

The education supplied by the parish school, and the staple literature of the time, were also favourable. Good instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic was within reach of the poorest. Most of the parochial teachers had themselves attended a University for one or two sessions. Many of them were licentiates

of the National Church, and nearly all were competent to teach classics and mathematics. Ample means were thus at hand to prepare a promising child for a learned profession. Thirty or forty years ago this was the ambition of almost every well-to-do family in Scotland. In rural districts it is so still, though not to the same extent as formerly. As in James Y. Simpson's case, the youngest son was often the child separated "to be a scholar." Many things conduced to this. He could be kept longer and more regularly at school than the elder brothers, who were soon called upon to assist in the work of the farm or of the village shop. As he grew up, the parents had seldom such a hard battle with the world as when they could have little or no help from their children. Moreover, the elder members of the family were ever proud to see a brother working his way to a higher social position, and they cordially gave him their aid. In his success they found honour and a reward. It says much in favour of these households, that to this fostering care we are indebted for James Simpson, and for others also, who have done good work for God and for their country, in the church, in politics, in literature, or in science.

Great changes have recently taken place in the reading of this class. Cheap books in general knowledge, newspapers, and weekly or monthly periodicals, have almost entirely superseded works of a much more serious, solid, and substantial kind. But we have not yet had time to see the full fruits of this change on the habits of the children of the working classes. In days not long gone by, the alphabet was printed on the back of the Shorter Catechism's title-page, which thus became the child's first book. Words could not declare more impressively than did A B C in this position, that the first use of the art of reading was to be religious; and the Catechism continued in his hand till he left school. In many country schools half a century ago, the Bible was the only reading-book used by the older scholars. But it is a great mistake to suppose that eight or ten years' drill in the Bible and Shorter Catechism begat

dislike of Scripture knowledge, cramped the child's mind, or stole the joyous young life from his heart. Theoretical educationists may insist that it must do this; but that such were not its fruits cannot be denied.

The library of the farmer, the village shopkeeper, the mechanic, and the industrious cottager, consisted chiefly of religious works. The favourite books were portions of the writings of William Guthrie, Brown of Wamphray, Alexander Nisbet, and, later, of Thomas Boston. These supplied reading in practical and experimental religion, while those of Gillespie and Rutherford fostered and gratified the inborn love for Church history and controversy. Peden's Prophecies furnished yet another kind of intellectual food. If to these we add a well-thumbed copy of Scottish proverbs, we have a fair specimen of their library. Nor were sentiment and imagination starved. The songs and ballads of the time and of other days were written in the hearts and memories of the young. Habits of industry, steady perseverance, thoughtful religious earnestness, and strong domestic affection were the outstanding features of very many of that class from which James Simpson sprung.

His paternal grandfather, Alexander Simpson, left Winchburgh in 1764, and settled at Slackend, Torphichen, about two miles and a half from Bathgate, where, as farmer and farrier, he reared five sons and one daughter. He died in 1816, aged ninety-one. His wife, Isabella Grindlay, grand-aunt of Jessie Grindlay, afterwards Lady Simpson, died in 1787. David, his fourth son,[1] father of James Y. Simpson, was born at Winchburgh, June 12, 1760. Having served an apprenticeship as a baker in Bathgate, he afterwards worked as a journeyman in London, Glasgow, and Leith. In January 1792, he

[1] The other children were,—Alexander, born 1750, succeeded his father at Slackend, and died in 1821; John, born 1752, died 1822; Thomas, born 1757, was successful in business, purchased the lands of Gormyre, near Torphichen, and died there at the advanced age of ninety-seven; George, born 1764, died 1832. There were also twin daughters—Isabella, who died in infancy, and Margaret, who married Mr. Kay, distiller, Torphichen.

married Mary, daughter of Mr. John Jarvey, farmer, Balbardie. He commenced business in Bathgate in 1810, after two unsuccessful attempts in other localities. His prospects at this time were of the most gloomy kind. In the spring of the same year, his wife, two sons, an only daughter, and an orphan nephew and niece to whom he had given a home, were stricken by dangerous fever. When James was born,[1] the household circumstances were at the worst. The small cash-book in which the shop drawings for the day were marked bears this entry :—"7th June, 1811. Drawn 8*s.* and 3*d.*" Hoping that "things might mend and take a turn for the better," David Simpson had carefully concealed the true state of his affairs from his wife. But a crisis seemed at hand, and he was forced to acquaint her with their condition. She had previously given her undivided attention to the care of her children, leaving business matters wholly to her husband. But now she took prompt steps to help him. Means were found to meet a pressing debt of £100 ; credit was restored, and, under her wise and energetic management, business speedily began to prosper. The lowest entry in the cash-book was on the day of James's birth. Up till that event matters had been steadily getting worse. With his appearance, sunshine broke in upon the household.

From the day that Mrs. Simpson took an active part in carrying on the trade, everything began to look better, and all the sterling qualities of her nature appeared. She was a woman in whom great force of character was combined with a quiet, gentle, and most loving disposition. Difficulties were needed to develop all her natural energy and strength. Deeply devout, she loved to sit at Jesus' feet. Like another Mary, she had found "the one thing needful." But this had not in the least unfitted her for the care and work of her house. Energy and

[1] The following quaint entry occurs in the Visiting Book of Dr. Dawson, the local practitioner—"275. June 7. Simpson, David, baker, Bathgate. Wife, Mary Jarvie. Æ. 40. Lab. nat. easy, rapid. 8th child. Son. Natus 8 o'clock. Uti veniebam natus. Paid 10s. 6d."

thrift were constantly necessary in household management, yet her husband and children never found her "cumbered about much serving." Her bright, cheery, industrious habits, the knack she had of making the crooked things of domestic life straight, the weight of her words and the beauty of her example, were ever remembered by her children as a happy comment on the words, "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."[1] Mrs. Simpson died when James was about nine years of age. He had, however, been long enough beside her to be impressed by her character and influenced by her example. In after years he loved to speak of her worth. During his childhood her health had begun to fail, and he was left much with her while the other members of the family were at work. The memory of her appearance as she knelt in prayer, which was her habit several times a day, continued fresh with him through life. The twentieth Psalm was one of her favourite portions of Scripture. She was wont to repeat the Scotch metrical version of it so often that the children came to call it "mother's Psalm." In trying times, and in the heart of much painful anxiety, it had been "her song in the house of her pilgrimage."[2] But he had yet homelier memories of his mother. When in the height of his fame, I heard a lady tell him of an industrial school for girls which she had set up in a village near Bathgate.

[1] Prov. xxxi.

[2] "Jehovah hear thee in the day when trouble he doth send:
And let the name of Jacob's God thee from all ill defend.
O let him help send from above, out of his sanctuary:
From Sion, his own holy hill, let him give strength to thee.
Let him remember all thy gifts, accept thy sacrifice:
Grant thee thine heart's wish, and fulfil thy thoughts and counsel wise.
In thy salvation we will joy; in our God's name we will
Display our banners: and the Lord thy prayers all fulfil."

"And what does your schoolmistress teach the girls?" he asked. "Some fancy work," was the answer, "and plenty of plain sewing and darning." Shortly after he said to me—"Do you know, the mention of 'darning' a little ago recalls a very, very old and precious memory? One day, when a child, I came into the house with a big hole in the heel of my stocking, and my mother set me on her knee, darned the stocking, and, as she drew it on, said—'My Jamie, when your mother's away, you will mind that she was a grand darner.' I remember the words as if they had been spoken yesterday. I would like to give a prize to the best 'darner' in the school."

After Mrs. Simpson's death the care of the household fell on her only daughter Mary, who became like a mother to James. She watched over him with great tenderness, anticipating his wants, helping him with his lessons, storing his memory with tales of local superstitions, and cherishing high hopes of his success in the future. All the brothers were devotedly attached to her.[1]

Several of James Simpson's near relatives were men of mark in their native district, and noted for strong individuality of character. His grandfather, Alexander Simpson, was long remembered in Linlithgowshire as a man of great shrewdness, and highly skilled in the diagnosis and treatment of cattle-disease. His uncles were prudent and energetic men of business—all of them, like their father, adepts in farriery. To these qualities was added a dash of deep superstition. Cattle diseases that baffled their skill were at once ascribed to witchcraft, and characteristic expedients were resorted to for the removal of the spell. On an occasion when murrain threatened to empty the

[1] Mary was born in 1800. She married Mr. John Pearson, brewer, with whom she emigrated to Australia, where she died. David Simpson's other children were—Thomas, born 1792, married Catherine, daughter of Mr. Alexander Fleming, farmer at Kirkroads, near Bathgate, and sister of the late John Fleming, D.D., Professor of Natural Science, New College, Edinburgh; John, born 1794, died 1841; Alexander, born 1797, now (1873) banker in Bathgate; George, born 1802, died in infancy; David, born 1804, died in Australia, 1865; George, born 1807, died 1814.

well-filled byre at Slackend, the old man took counsel with his sons, and pointed out that the plague could only be stayed by their giving up a cow to be buried alive. Accordingly a grave was prepared in a field behind the byre, and the beast was led to its edge with great solemnity. "How shall we get her in?" asked one son. "Father will take the head, you will take the tail, and we will push at the side," was the ready answer. "I remember," says the narrator, "seeing the earth heaving as the soil was pushed in." "Certainly," wrote Dr. Simpson in 1861, "some strange superstitions do remain, or at least lately did remain, among us. The sacrifice, for example, of the cock and other animals for recovery from epilepsy and convulsions, is by no means extinct in some Highland districts. In old Pagan and Mithraic times we know that the sacrifice of the ox was common. I have myself often listened to the account given by one near and dear to me, who was in early life personally engaged in the offering up and burying of a poor live cow as a sacrifice to the Spirit of the Murrain. This occurred within twenty miles of the metropolis of Scotland."[1] The uncle who became proprietor of Gormyre was truly his father's son. "In the same district," Dr. Simpson continues, "a relative of mine bought a farm not very many years ago. Among his first acts, after taking possession, was the enclosing a small triangular corner of one of the fields within a stone wall. The corner cut off, and which still remains cut off, was the 'Gudeman's Croft' —an offering to the Spirit of Evil, in order that he might abstain from ever blighting or damaging the rest of the farm. The clergyman of the Free Church, in lately telling me the circumstance, added that my kinsman had been, he feared, far from acting honestly with Lucifer after all, as the corner which he had cut off for the 'Gudeman's' share was, perhaps, the most worthless and sterile spot on the whole property. Some may look on such superstitions and superstitious practices as matters

[1] Archæology: its Past and its Future Work. By James Y. Simpson, M.D. Edinburgh, 1861.

utterly vulgar and valueless in themselves, but in the eyes of the archæologist they become interesting and important, when we remember that the popular superstitions of Scotland, as of other countries, are for the most part true antiquarian vestiges of the pagan creeds and customs of our earlier ancestors; our present folk-lore being merely in general a degenerated and debased form of the highest mythological and medical lore of very distant times." The laird of Gormyre was known to have interrupted sowing for a day, when two magpies flew across the field, in the belief that all the seed sown between the time of their appearance and sunset would be blighted. Another uncle was wont, when driving his cart along the road to Edinburgh, to return home at once, even though nearing town, if a hare crossed in front of him. Yet these men were intelligent above the average. They were industrious, persevering, and self-reliant: men who knew how to make money, how to keep it, and make it minister to their influence among their fellows.

But, with all his superstition, David Simpson's father held higher and healthier views. In 1785 his sons David and George wishing to see the world, left home secretly and travelled on foot to London, working for their own support by the way. "David and George," wrote the old man, "this comes to let you know that we are all in some measure of health at present. Blessed be Him that gives it! Your mother has had a long sore trouble, but she is now a deal better. Your letters were aye like a cure to her, but your last made her tremble. . . . Now I learn what was to be a pleasure to me in my old age is now become a grief. To run off to London to be made soldiers either by sea or land, is what I never thought you or any belonging to me intended. The war is about to break out. If you had a mind to shun it you would come home and look something like your father's sons. But now I have lost all hope of seeing you any more. This I tell you with a most sorrowing heart. . . . Now my advice to you is to come home, if you wish not to be pressed

to go to sea. . . . Would you desire great riches? They sometimes take wings in the morning and flee away. There are some in our place I have seen great, who are now very low. So if you have a small income well managed and content therewith, you will be as happy as they that have more. Our time in this world is but short. It is compared to a shadow that fleeth swiftly away. It is your business and mine, at home and abroad, to consider that we are in God's presence, and in a short time must appear before Him who is the Judge of the quick and the dead. So that the best way is ever to live in His fear. Beware of what company you keep. . . . Let us know how you are employed, and how you take to the place. If it answers not what you expected, send your chests directly back; I shall pay their freight, and will meet you gladly at what port you come to. Mother will be restless till you write your letter. It is not dear—only tenpence—so do not spare writing to us the truth. No more at present, but rest your affectionate father till death." The letter is long, and contains the statement of views and feelings, little in harmony with those that led him to sacrifice the live cow to the demon of the murrain.

George Jarvey, James Simpson's granduncle, was the first antiquary of the family. Jarvey began life as a brewer, but, after some years he turned his premises into "The Brewery Inn," which, with its fine garden, its rooms crowded with curiosities—"auld nicknackets"—and "mine host's" pleasant manners, was a favourite resort. His memory is perpetuated in the name of the chief thoroughfare of Bathgate—Jarvey Street. Not a few touches of thought and sentiment, characteristic of his immediate ancestors, were inherited by James. These influenced his life, even though he, more than most men, early learned to hold them well in hand, and keep them obedient to a strong and thoroughly disciplined will. Though it is beyond doubt that some mental, and even moral, as well as physical features may be truly hereditary, yet their power and scope

are generally determined and regulated, according as their possessor yields to God's truth or to man's training, or to both. But a will like James Simpson's, though ready to acknowledge both, ever plans and works as if it had an inherent power to shape, if not wholly to control, occasion and circumstance. Nevertheless, even in such cases inherited qualities are persistently influential. They give the tone to the individuality. We may not know how the taint travels, what keeps certain aspects of it inactive and inoperative for generations, or what determines its random reappearance after the lapse of years, but the transmission of the physical and psychical features even of remote ancestors, by means of descendants who have not the least likeness to them, is well known. A child with fair hair and blue eyes, may be found in a household where all the other members have black hair and dark iris. Not unfrequently, the dark hair is associated with light blue eyes, as if the colour of the hair of one ancestor was inherited, and the colour of the eye of another. The bones themselves yield to the same potent force. In a gallery of family portraits, one may represent a man of perfect symmetry—high brow, deep chin, broad chest, and powerful limbs. Another, the same symmetry, with all these features on a small scale. While in a third, you see the head and chest of the former joined to the diminutive limbs of the latter. So with disposition. The mental peculiarities, and even the moral tastes, of three or four ancestors, may, after having been long in abeyance, be again realized and form a highly complex individuality. The term "many-minded" not inaptly expresses this. Thus the interest that surrounds the stocks from which great men have sprung, when we attempt to estimate their distinguishing qualities of head and heart. The interest is increased in the case of those whom God has specially used to promote the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not unseldom He has given the deep feeling, strong will, extreme conscientiousness, large unselfishness, and generally, great force and decision of character, to one

member of a family, which, singly, had been possessed by individual ancestors. Thus He has laid his hand on treasures not used in the past, sanctified them to himself, and sent forth their owners to do Him special service in that profession, calling, or work on which they have entered by their own free choice. It was given to James to carry the outstanding features of his relatives into a sphere of great influence. The decision of character, the strong purpose, the shrewdness, or the spirit of enterprise, distributed unequally among his uncles and father, were in him united to the high sentiment, refined tastes, and loving disposition of his mother, or of other members in the maternal line of descent.

"Every Scottish man has a pedigree. It is a national prerogative as inalienable as his pride and his poverty."[1] James's maternal grandfather, John Jarvey, farmer at Balbardie, near Bathgate, was descended from a Huguenot family, who had been settled for some time at Torwood, Stirlingshire, whence they removed, at the latter end of the seventeenth century, to the farm of Boghall, Bathgate, which members of the house held for nearly a hundred years. John Jarvey, like his father and grandfather, became connected by marriage with a family of higher social position than his own. He married Mary Cleland, whose mother was a Cleland of Auchinlee, the representative branch of the Clelands of Cleland. Her grandmother was one of the Wardrops of Cults. James Simpson's "inalienable prerogative" thus links him, on the father's side, with a family of vigorous limb, strong will, great shrewdness, and persevering industry. On the mother's side, he was associated with the *gentle* blood of Scotland, and was, of course, too true a Scotchman and antiquary not sometimes to linger over that little link in the pedigree, by which he could claim relationship with the Clelands of that Ilk. There were noted names in the family. Alexander, the first Cleland that history has deigned to mention, married a daughter of

[1] Sir Walter Scott's *Autobiography*. Lockhart's Life of Scott.

Adam Wallace of Riccarton, grandfather of the hero.[1] The eighth Cleland of Cleland was one of the "Flowers o' the Forest" cut down at Flodden. Fragrance of devotion to the beauty and the cause of Queen Mary is still around the name of another Cleland. Other representative members of the household became connected by marriage with noted family names, as the Stewarts of Blantyre, the Stewarts of Cardonald, the Hamiltons of Bargany,[2] and the Campbells of Ardkinglas. But as the men who win nobility and make names famous have more honour than they who only inherit them, we leave the pedigree, in order to mark the steps to the higher honours.

For a right understanding of these, it is necessary to have some knowledge of James Simpson's native district, where he spent the years when scenes and circumstances have power to bias the mind, and, in some degree, to mould the character. That they did so in his case is not to be doubted, especially in fostering the love for aspects of culture, which may be held to lie outside of the profession in which he became most highly distinguished. We shall see, however, that they reacted, in a very influential way, on his views and practice as a physician.

Nearly five and a half miles west from Edinburgh, at a point a little beyond Ratho Station on the North British Railway, a branch line to Glasgow strikes off to the south-west, passing through a rich mineral district, bounded by the Pentland and Lanarkshire hills on the south, and the Firth of Forth on the north. Bathgate is about fourteen miles from Ratho by this line. The approach from the east is through a bleak country, consisting chiefly of extensive tracts of peat, and deep beds of a stiff, light-coloured boulder clay, covered here and there with patches of Scotch fir. More fertile spots occur at intervals, but

[1] In 1860, I lunched at 52 Queen Street with an American Professor. As we left the house together he remarked—"I guess your Sir William Wallace had a countenance like Simpson's."

[2] "With kind Bargany, faithful to his word,
Whom Heaven made good and social, tho' a lord."
Hamilton of Bangour.

the general appearance indicates a cold, sterile soil, and damp climate. On the outer edge of this district, from Edinburgh to Midcalder on the south, and Linlithgow on the north, the soil, derived chiefly from the neighbouring trap hills, is good, highly cultivated, and in some parts well wooded. Until a very recent period, the land bounding the railway was held by working farmers, who were content to manage their holdings as their fathers had done. Within a few years, however, great changes have taken place. A better style of agriculture has been introduced. The farms are larger. The whole face of the country has been broken by mining operations. Ironstone, coal, and, especially, oil-yielding shales, are worked. A great population is now where only a few straggling cottages were formerly. If the tract lying between the main and the branch lines of railway be regarded as a triangle, Ratho would represent the apex, Linlithgow one angle of the base, Bathgate another, and the range of low-lying trap hills which stretch interruptedly from Linlithgow to the south, would form the base line. Bathgate is situated on the slope of one of these hills, having between it and Linlithgow heights composed of trap, masses of freestone, deep beds of mountain limestone abounding with fossils, thin seams of coal, bands of ironstone, and at one point a rich, though much broken, lode of galæna, or native lead ore. Close to Bathgate, on the east, is the Kirkton limestone, a deposit brought into prominent notice by Dr. Hibbert in 1835, in his Memoir on the Burdiehouse Limestone, near Edinburgh. From its elevation, Bathgate looks down to the west on the basin that yields the Torbanehill and Boghead mineral, famed for its oil, and for the scientific controversy to which, shortly after its discovery, it gave rise. In this basin, and chiefly on its rim, rich beds of coal and ironstone are worked. Within a couple of stone-throws of the Kirkton limestone is Kirkroads, the birthplace of Professor Fleming, who in Simpson's boyhood had already drawn the attention of palæontologists to the numerous fossils in the Bathgate hills and neighbourhood, and after-

wards made good illustrative use of them in his "British Animals."[1]

The surface features of the district—hill and valley, cultivated field and wide morass, rich meadow and old plantations with thick undergrowth—are highly favourable to a varied *fauna* and *flora*. More wild mammals are met within it than in any other part of the Lothians. The nests of such comparatively rare birds as the siskin, the grasshopper warbler, and the black-cap warbler have been obtained in it. The kite, golden oriole, turtle-dove, grey shrike, and ruff, have been taken in the neighbourhood. Close on the town a patch of ground is covered with the broad-leaved ragwort (*senecio saracenicus*), rare in a wild state —the plant which the old herbalist Gerarde prized so highly when "ministered in oyntment and oyles," and with which he cured a gentleman "who was grievously wounded in the lungs." On the heights one or two species of sub-alpine mosses occur, not common in lowland districts. On the north border of the parish, and not far from Kipps, where Sir Robert Sibbald formed his first "Physick garden," the botanist may gather the common soap-wort, and the dusky cranesbill, now wild, but most likely introduced by Sibbald.

To the archæologist the district is not less interesting. Not far from the point where the railway diverges from the main line is the "Catstane," to which Simpson devoted much attention,[2] and described "as standing in nearly the middle of the base of a triangular fork of ground formed by the meeting of

[1] Other accomplished naturalists have acknowledged the scientific interest of the physical features of the district. Shortly before Professor Edward Forbes's death, I walked with him from Torbanehill to Kirkton, and thence along the Bathgate hills to the north. When in sight of a section made by quarrying operations, he exclaimed, "What a grand wall for our museum!" During this long walk he carried with him a lump of Torbanehill mineral, containing true *Lepidodendroid* impressions, for his new museum, and for the sake of the "*non-coalers*," as he named those who held this mineral to be argillo-bitumen—whatever that may mean,—and not coal!

[2] The Catstane. Is it not the Tomb of Hengest and Horsa? By Sir J. Y. Simpson, Bart. Edinburgh, 1862.

the Gogar water with the river Almond." Approaching Bathgate from the east, on the right hand about a mile from the town, are traces of a Cistercian monastery founded by David I. Nearer, on the left hand, is the site of the old "castle of Bathket," given by Robert the Bruce to his daughter Marjory on her marriage with "Walter the Steward," father of Robert II. Traces of Wallace and Bruce and Edward I. abound in the neighbourhood. Wallace's Cave—a deep gap in freestone on the Avon, near Crawhill—is believed to have sheltered the hero after the disastrous field of Falkirk.[1] Bruce is said to have halted for a season on his way to Bannockburn on a rounded eminence, known as the "King's Knowe," in the south-east corner of Wallhouse Park.

The Cromlech at Kipps, the circular camp on Cairnpapple, and the numerous Celtic names of places in the district, suggest other branches of archæology. It might have been expected that a boy like Simpson would be early biassed, in such a district, towards natural science and antiquities. There are many proofs that this was the case. Indeed, it was scarcely possible for an intelligent boy to escape such a bias. Thus John Fleming and John Reid, as well as James Simpson, early yielded to the influences of the scenes and circumstances surrounding their birthplace. Till a comparatively recent period the same was true of many of the youths of the locality. The industrial condition of the district is not now favourable to the development of these tastes. But in days not long gone by it was not uncommon for Bathgate weavers to take to classical studies, in order to be able to understand works on

[1] In the "Book of William Wallace by Blind Henry the Minstrel, 1469," Edward is represented as resting at Torphichen, near Bathgate :—

"Schir John the Graym, fra Dundaff prewaly,
Till Wallace com with a gud chewalry ;
Tithandis him brocht, the Sotheroun com at hand,
In Torfychan King Eduard was lugeand ;
Stroyand the place off purwiance that was thar ;
Sanct Jhonys gud for thaim thai wald nocht spar."

Natural History. I have heard Simpson speak of one man, whose earnings at the loom could never have amounted to fifty pounds a year, who could write a Latin description of a species of plant or animal in a way that an accomplished naturalist might have envied.

In James Simpson's boyhood the population of Bathgate parish was between 2000 and 3000. It is now above 10,000. The townspeople were chiefly handloom weavers,—a quick-witted race, who took great interest in general and local politics, and keenly debated the affairs of Kirk and Commonwealth. Some scepticism in religious matters and much hard drinking prevailed, both among shopkeepers and weavers. One who had spent about seventy years among them said recently—"We are always told that bygone years were better than the present. But when I was a 'callant' the drinking was awful. One Bathgate man then could take as much as three can do now. Religion was low, and morality was no better."

James was sent to school when about four years of age. Henderson, his first teacher, had lost a limb and was familiarly known in the district as "Timmerleg." He was one of a class, seldom met with now, that once occupied a useful place in the educational arrangements of Scotland—men who helped to stir up the parish schoolmasters to attention and activity, at a time when there were no healthy influences of Government inspection, and very little thorough Presbyterial oversight. Like Henderson, few of the teachers of small venture schools had any fitness for their office. The broken soldier, the cripple, or the man of habitually bad health, unable to earn a livelihood in any other way, generally took to the work of the schoolmaster. When James had mastered the alphabet, he was sent to the parish school, then taught by a Mr. Thornton. Shortly afterwards Thornton's place was taken by Mr. James Taylor, under whom Simpson continued till he went to College. Taylor's memory is still cherished by surviving pupils. He was a good man, an excellent scholar, and an able teacher. His most

eminent pupil ever spoke of him with great respect and affection, and owned that his thoughtfulness, his gentle bearing in school, and the pains he took even with the dullest of his scholars, not only won the love of all to his person, but begat and fostered love for learning also. In his own limited sphere, and in his influence over the young, he showed many of those characteristics which, later, found full illustration in Arnold's work at Rugby.

As a child, James was peculiarly winsome. Gentle as a girl, quiet and affectionate, he was warmly loved by the other members of his household, and by the neighbours. An old woman spoke of him as "a rosy bairn wi' laughin' mou' and dimpled cheeks." His voice even in boyhood had the sweet, silvery tone that characterized it in ripe years. At school he early showed industry in class work, quick apprehension, love of books, and a most retentive memory. At home he was "the wise wean," and "the young philosopher." There was early promise of a rich fruitage. Lessons were easy. He was generally dux of his class. The whole work of the school was a delight. With his companions he entered heartily into boyhood's sports, but he ever preferred books to play. His love of knowledge, and especially of facts, was insatiable. It seemed of small matter what the book was. If it brought information of any kind he was satisfied. This accounts for an expression he used not many years ago. Reference having been made to the saying, "The Bible and Shakespeare are the best books in the world," he remarked, in so serious a way as almost to alarm a good man present, "The Bible, and Shakespeare, and Oliver and Boyd's Almanac! At least I know the Almanac would have been the greatest prize for me when a boy." "James," says his brother Alexander, "was ever so loving, gentle, and obliging, that though I, like most hard workers in a warm atmosphere, was rather quick of temper, I do not recollect ever to have been angry with him. He was aye at the call of the older members of the house—running with rolls to Balbardie House, where,

as 'the bonnie callant,' he was a great favourite, or ready to keep the shop for a time, when he always had a book in his hand." His work sometimes brought trial. "I remember," continues his brother, "finding him sitting in the street on a very dusty day, sobbing bitterly, the tears running down his cheeks covered with dust. 'What ails you, Jamie?' I said, and he answered, sobbing as if his heart would break, 'I've broken the pony's knees.' I told him it was not his fault, but mine. I had ridden the beast so much for a couple of days, that it was worn out and could not help stumbling. This comforted him, but he was very vexed. As I passed along the road with him between Bathgate and Torphichen, after he had won a world-wide renown, he recalled another incident connected with the same pony. Pointing to a spot by the wayside, where the water from the drainage of a field has formed a deep depression in the ditch into which it falls, he said, "I never all my life was in greater terror than there. When a little boy I was riding with a great basket of bread to Torphichen, and the pony, wishing to drink, *would* go into that hole. I had a hard pull. But letting the weight of the basket fall on the opposite rein, I kicked the pony's sides and urged it past. It was a near shave."

The mode in which David Simpson managed his house was in many respects peculiar. As the sons grew up, they came to regard him as a familiar companion and friend rather than as a parent. At a very early age each member of the family came to feel that the success and happiness of the household depended on his own exertions, and that all were expected to work, not for themselves only, but for the general good. United in effort, the reward came equally to each. There was one purse. The "till" which received the shop drawings was without fastenings of any sort. Its contents were free to all. But each son was expected to consider the things of others before looking on his own. The interests of the house were to be preferred to those of the individual. Work was in

every case, except one, held to make good a right to the use of the "till." James was the exception. From his childhood he was the favourite, for whom all the brothers were willing to work. He was thus in early years a stranger to the chilling influences of straitened means, and never knew anything of the penury in the midst of which many eminent men have been reared. In his boyhood and youth the circumstances of the household were prosperous. The members were strong for work, and money was spent freely. Lavish care was bestowed on James. Alexander especially watched over him with care and tenderness. "He felt he would be great some day." When the social usages of the town and the prevalent free mode of living presented strong temptations to the boy, Alexander would put his arm round his neck, and tenderly warn him: "Others may do this, but it would break a' our hearts and blast a' your prospects were you to do it." Having been thus spoken to on one occasion, when he had been later out at night than usual, "Jamie was greatly troubled, and cried a' the night, like to break his heart."

While yet a schoolboy he visited Edinburgh for the first time, having walked from Bathgate. His early archæological tastes took him straight to Greyfriars' Churchyard, where he copied two inscriptions. To one of these he added the note, "Taken from an old but somewhat elegant tomb." Not pleased with this sentence, he drew his pen through it and wrote, "'Twas taken from an old but elegant tomb in Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh. Date 1655." This antiquarian bias early appeared. When a little boy, it was his great delight to rest on his father's knee, or sit by his sister's side, and listen eagerly to stories of district superstitions, and to anecdotes of local or of family history.

CHAPTER II.

Student Life—John Reid—Arts Classes—Expenses—Bent toward Medical Studies—Letter from his Father—Verses—Field Observations—Residence at Stockbridge—Inverkip Surgeonship—Thesis—Scottish Liberalism—State of the Edinburgh University—The new Professors.

Mr. Simpson entered the Edinburgh University at the age of fourteen. He left home in good heart and hope. His high ambition for several years had been to become a student. And now "nothing but joy, health, hopefulness without end, looked out from the blooming young man." His friend and schoolfellow, John Reid, his senior by two years, afterwards Professor of Anatomy in the University of St. Andrews, had begun his student life in 1823. Reid's altered bearing soon after he entered College greatly impressed young Simpson, and strengthened his desire to get to Edinburgh. "I remember," he says, "his return to Bathgate at the Christmas which followed his first removal to Edinburgh, as if it were yesterday. A group of us, just let loose from school, encountered John Reid immediately after his arrival in one of the streets of the village. I could show you the precise spot. His own former class instantly surrounded him, and the younger scholars, such as I was, anxiously clustered round at a respectful distance. Though Edinburgh was only eighteen miles distant, few or none of us had visited the capital, and we listened eagerly and wonderingly to what he told us of it, and particularly of the College and its Professors. But, like most others, I believe I was on the whole less awe-struck with this than with the strange metamorphosis which appeared to have mysteriously occurred in our

former schoolmate, for the rough country schoolboy, who had left us two short months before, had become suddenly changed into a sharpish college student, wearing an actual long-tailed coat, and sporting a small cane."

In session 1825-26, Simpson attended the Junior Greek and Humanity classes, under Professors Dunbar and Pillans. In 1826-27 he took their Senior classes, and the first Mathematical class, under Professor Wallace. In 1827-28 he enrolled as a student of medicine, and during the same session attended the class of Natural Philosophy (Professor Leslie), the class of Moral Philosophy (Professor Wilson), and the third Greek class. In after years he was wont to refer to his attendance at the Arts' classes as having been of great use to him. Proud of his attainments at the parish school, and confiding in the exaggerated estimate which his relations had of his acquirements, it was humbling to discover at College how little he knew accurately, and how unfit he was, at the outset, to cope with the quickness and ready precision in class-work which distinguished the city-bred and city-educated boys. In the Arts' classes, moreover, he first got a glimpse of those wide fields of culture, which, in a sense, fit for every profession and yet lie outside of each. The present practice, which invites to the study of medicine through a preliminary examination-pass that actually gives no security for previous training, is, to say the least, very questionable. The observational faculties are called at once into use, but no care is taken to secure any systematic instruction in the art of reasoning on results—on facts and phenomena. Thus the growing tendency among young naturalists to form wide generalizations from a few partial facts. In the department of biology this has especially been the case. Sweeping conclusions are drawn from inadequate premisses. Generalizations are reached which constantly suggest the figure of an inverted pyramid, the facts being as the point on which it rests, and the inferences as the now toppling base!

When about to enter on the second session at College, he was advised by Professor Pillans to become a candidate for a Stewart Bursary. After competition, one was awarded to him, of the value of £10, tenable for three years. These bursaries were founded in 1810, by the Rev. James Stewart, South Carolina. In awarding them, the Senatus was bound by the terms of the deed of trust to give a preference to candidates of the name of Stewart or of Simpson—the latter having been the maiden name of the founder's wife. Though a painstaking and diligent student, Mr. Simpson did not gain much distinction in the literary classes. His exercises prepared for the Latin and Greek classes—carefully preserved by his brother Alexander—show that he worked well. With one exception, the twenty-five exercises written for the Senior Humanity class are marked *bene* or + *bene*. When the exercise was returned, he was wont to draw up a list of as many of the corrections as seemed to him just, and then he boldly added, "I object to the rest." An essay for the Second Greek class, on "The Life of Herodotus, and his Character as an Historian," is feebly praised by Professor Dunbar as "tolerably good." One expression had disgusted the Professor. After noticing the subject-matter of the different books the boy adds—"The History which is mentioned above as the only production of his pen is written in the Ionic dialect. The style is easy, sweet, and elegant. Geography, manners, customs, and religious ceremonies *are all enclosed in this happy frame.* To the beauty of arrangement are added the inimitable charms of diction and colouring. His pictures are animated, and full of that sweetness which so eminently distinguishes him; sometimes, however, they are overcast with a shade of melancholy, which the sight of human misfortune gave him." The Professor drew a broad pencil-mark under the expression, "enclosed in this happy frame," and added, "Very bad!" Nevertheless, both in this long essay and in other exercises, there is abundant promise of power. They contain some vigorous thinking, and a grace

of style seldom met with in the literary efforts of a boy of fifteen.

His companionship at this period gave his mind a strong bent towards literary work. When he arrived in Edinburgh he joined John Reid, who then lodged with Dr. Macarthur, in No. 1 Adam Street. Both Reid and Simpson had for years been under Macarthur, when he acted as assistant in the Bathgate parish school, and they now associated with him more as friends than as pupils. Macarthur had obtained a situation in one of the Edinburgh public schools, and had entered the University as a student of Medicine, in which he graduated. He had a very high estimate of the ability of his young friends, and urged them to begin at once to seek distinction in literary work. When they had been a short time with him, he said to Mr. Simpson's brother, Alexander, "I can now do with four hours' sleep, John Reid can do with six, but I have not been able to break in James yet." Himself a man of great energy, and of strong literary tastes, he was ever prophesying a high place and a brilliant reputation for his former pupils—"if only they would work." And when he afterwards heard of any successful effort he was wont to remark—"Yes, but how they worked!"

It was soon evident, however, that James Simpson's reputation was not to be won in the department of Classics, Mathematics, or Moral Philosophy. His class attainments were not above those of the average run of students, and were not fitted to confirm and strengthen the high opinions his relatives had formed of his abilities. His certificates, indeed, bore that "his progress in Greek was such as merited considerable praise," that "he gave distinguished proof of diligence and proficiency" in Latin, and that "he was a regular and attentive student" in Moral Philosophy. This was all, but it was not much.

The influence of early home-training soon appeared in his habits as a student lodger. Though reared in the midst of comparative plenty, and having had all his wants liberally,

and without stint or grudging, supplied by his father and brothers, he had come thoroughly under the household spirit of industry and its rule of mutual help. If not permitted to add to the common purse, he felt bound to show his gratitude to the other members of the family for their lavish love to him, by efforts after self-help and strict economy. This led him to compete for the Stewart Bursary. It also induced him to keep down his personal expenses. One of his first acts, on arriving in Edinburgh in 1825, was to spend 9d. on a small book entitled "The Economy of Human Life." The following quotation from this work is written on the blank leaf of his little cash-book: "Let not thy recreations be expensive, lest the pain of purchasing them exceed the pleasure thou hast in their enjoyment." Above this he writes,

> "No trivial gain nor trivial loss despise,
> Mole-hills, if often heaped, to mountains rise.
> Weigh every small expense, and nothing waste,
> Farthings long saved amount to pounds at last."

Later, the same carefulness is shown in writing the outlines and first copy of a long paper on Erysipelas, on a number of militia blank schedules. Throughout his College life, when chiefly dependent on supplies from home, he kept an exact account of his expenses, which at the close of the session was submitted to the family. The rent of his room in Adam Street was not more than 3s. a week. During the first session his expenses were confined almost wholly to necessary food, the other items being "fourpence for fruit," and a few shillings for second-hand copies of "a French Dictionary, Adam's Antiquities, Milton's Poems, and The Economy of Human Life." In the growth of his student-library, we see the first expression of that wondrous variety of tastes which afterwards distinguished him. In 1827 he purchased "Monro on the Bones, Byron's Giaour, a Church Bible, Bell's Anatomy, Fife's Chemistry," etc. In 1829, "Childe Harold, The London Dissector, Paley's Natural Theology, Fife's Anatomy, The Fortunes of Nigel," etc. The

entries are often curious, and their association odd. Under one date, and as a single entry, occur "Monro's Anatomy, shoes mending, stakes and stock." Under others, "Vegetables and Byron's Beauties;" "Finnen Hadies, 2d. and Bones of the Leg £1, 1s.;" "Subject £2, Spoon 6d., and Bread and Tart, one shilling and eightpence;" Fur Cap 14 sh., Mary's Tippet 2 sh. and 6d.;" "Duncan's Therapeutics 9d.," "Snuff 1½d." and "Early Rising 9½d." The snuff and the book on early rising show how anxious he was to walk up to Dr. Macarthur's advice,—"Sit late and rise betimes."

The companionship, tastes, and early studies of his friend Reid influenced him from the commencement of his College life, and, no doubt, had much to do in deciding him to select Medicine as a profession. "When John Reid began to study Medicine in 1825," he says, "Dr. Macarthur, he, and I lodged together in the upper flat of a tall house in Adam Street. He cared comparatively little for Chemistry and Chemistry books; but he used to pore hour after hour over Fyfe's four-volume Anatomy, and he attended Dr. Knox's lectures most zealously twice a day—in the forenoon and evening. I was then a very young student, at the Greek and Humanity classes in the College, but I was occasionally allowed by Dr. Reid to look into his medical books, or listen to his first demonstrations at home, and sometimes, as a special favour, I was taken by him on an evening to hear even one of Dr. Knox's lectures."

The distance between Edinburgh and Bathgate is only eighteen miles, but the postage of a letter in those days was 6½d. This greatly interfered with the communications from home. Correspondence was chiefly kept up by means of parcels forwarded by the carrier or "cadger." The only letter, received during his first session, which he preserved, is from his father. The old man wrote:—

"My dear Son,—I am glad to hear by John Pearson that you are well. I intended to be in Edinburgh this month, but I find it is out of my power. Be so good as write me what money you will

take to bring you out. James, I am now turning old, and wearing awa like the snaw among the thaw. I have had a weary winter, But will be glad to see you at Bathgate.—I am yours in Heart,

"DAVID SIMPSON.

"BATHGATE, *March* 30, 1826."

As a medical student he was a most diligent note-taker, jotting down as much of a lecture as kept the whole subject before him. This outline was filled in at night with much care, the works referred to in the class were named and characterized, and the prelections of the Professor freely criticised—sometimes too freely, and in a style not very complimentary to his teachers. The questioning habit, which in mature years was so strongly marked, was already formed. Whatever good he may have got from the strong points of a lecture, the frequent use of ? in his notes, shows that he did not miss any of the weak ones. The notes taken in Liston's class are alone free from the *query*. The extra-mural class of Surgery under Liston had great attractions for him. Liston's blunt manners, his dash and daring, his love of new and simple methods of work, his quick eye and dexterous hand as an operator, his contempt—ever freely expressed among his pupils—of the cumbrous appliances used by contemporary surgeons, and the loud demand early uttered by him for hospital reform, were sure to attract a mind like Simpson's. Besides, he regarded Liston as almost a "Bathgate bairn," for he had been reared in the manse of Ecclesmachan, a few miles from Bathgate. Liston's certificates show that Mr. Simpson had worked well under him. It is certified that "he has been a most diligent and attentive student of Surgery, that he has attended his lectures and examinations with exemplary regularity, and that from his habits of attention he is convinced that he will become a well-informed and excellent practitioner." Later, he certified that Mr. Simpson had "officiated as surgeons' dresser under him in the Royal Infirmary to his perfect satisfaction, performing his duties with ability and assiduity." He adds, "From what I have had occasion to observe in regard to

him, both during the time already alluded to, and during his attendance of three years in my surgical lectures, I believe him to be very well acquainted with his profession, and fully qualified for the practice of it."

Mr. Simpson had many of the qualities fitted to lead to distinction as a surgeon, but the almost womanly tenderness of heart, which was his from childhood, led him to shrink from a branch of the profession in whose practice he would have been compelled to witness the most intense forms of human suffering. It was when looking on the great surgeon's work that he first began to grope after means for the alleviation of pain, when the patient was in the hands of the operator. After seeing the terrible agony of a poor Highland woman under amputation of the breast, he left the class-room and went straight to the Parliament House to seek work as a writer's clerk. But, on second thoughts, he returned to the study of Medicine, asking, "Can anything be done to make operations less painful?"

In the hard work of the last years of his medical course he sought relaxation and a solace in versifying. From boyhood this had been a favourite amusement; but he never thought himself a poet, a notion which leads many promising youths astray. He had pleasure and a happy facility in throwing his fancies into rhyme. The verses written at this period show that he had caught the warm glow and dash of light-hearted medical student life. They are sentimental, rollicking, or satirical, written in an off-hand way, and fitted to beget the impression that he had gone into the very heart of dissipation. But it was not so. There is, however, good reason to believe that, if he did not fall into gross immorality, it was because he saw that such a course of life would interfere with his study and mar his success, and not from any higher motives. Nor was this to be lightly esteemed. Love of study, devotion to class-work, and even the ambition to please friends by winning success as students, have kept many young men from conduct directly hurtful both to soul and body. This,

indeed, is the earthward aspect of that early training and parental example, whose highest fruits are reaped in a life of love to God and the good hope of heaven. The tone of many a medical student's conversation has, not unfrequently, created a very erroneous impression as to his true character. But it is a mistake to suppose that the air of indifference to study, the gay bearing in the presence of death itself, the light jest over "a subject," or even the apparently sincere desire to be regarded as one sitting loose to all fixed principles, have in his eyes the weight and importance attached to them by outsiders. Good health, the sense of increasing knowledge, with its accompanying consciousness of power, but without that revelation of personal ignorance which high attainments generally bring, beget a confidence which is often mistaken for presumption. Then there are strong wills bent on turning bright dreams into realities, and hopes which see some fondly-desired haven lying far off in sunlight, but which refuse to see the peril, the darkness, and the storm between them and it. All this tends to beget self-confidence, pride, and sometimes utter disregard of the opinions of men older, wiser, and better than themselves. But there may be—there frequently are—associated with these, qualities of a nobler, better, and morally healthier kind, by whose working, indeed, the character is kept in balance, as the body is in symmetry by the antagonistic lie and action of diverse muscles. Again, distaste of work may be paraded by the hardest and most earnest workers. Seeming indifference to the good opinion of others is not unseldom followed by deep, secret self-upbraiding. The thoughtless jest and careless behaviour of many a student in the dissecting-room, are sometimes no more than nature's effort to conceal the squeamishness that so often marks his first visits to it. And often the hours wasted with companions in unprofitable conversation, are atoned for by time stolen from sleep, and devoted to serious meditation or to persistently hard work. This state of mind admits of no defence. It is most unmanly. But it does not necessarily imply all those evils

which many ascribe to it. Yet for a youth to seem to be worse than he is, places him among those who wish to appear better than they are—a class with which true students, with their high aims and generous impulses, can have no fellowship. James Simpson's college rhymes were written from the point of view now referred to. They were fitted to beget the impression that he was himself the "fast" student, or the love-sick youth, of whom he sung. In some of his verses he draws on his fancy for scenes, circumstances, and incidents which, there is abundant proof, altogether lay outside of his experience. Of this kind is his "Parody on the Soldier's Dream"—

"Our tav'rin bells rang, for the night-cloud had lowered,
And the police night-watch through the city 'gan roam;
And thousands had sunk from the streets overpowered,
'The flush' to get drunk, and the poor to get home."

The parody, which is of considerable length, indicates a good deal of practice in rhyming, and some cleverness. It has a reckless air about it. But so careful was he to guard against excess, that he never treated his fellow-students, who occasionally visited him in the evening, to anything stronger than coffee. In 1829 he wrote ten stanzas, with the title "Farewell to Loch Vennachar"—a locality he had never visited. His subject is the feelings of a young Highlander, when forced to leave his home and Highland hills for work in a distant land. Had he seen the verses later in life, he would have been the first to decry them. Written by a hard-working student, they are referred to here to show the early rise of the habit, afterwards so strongly marked, of seeking recreation in intellectual pursuits outside of professional work.

"Ye scenes of my childhood, a long, long adieu,
Adieu my all-happy, my sweet Highland home.
For in far distant climes, far from pleasure and you,
In life's mazy paths I am doomed now to roam.
. . . . . .
And thee I must leave too, my fair Highland maid!
But think on me, Mary, when distant afar,
And remember the sweet, sweet words that you said
On the heather-bell brae of Loch Vennachar."

Mr. Simpson spent the summers of his student life in Bathgate, where he had ample scope and opportunity to gratify his love of general science in the way in which alone scientific study can ever be thorough. The information got at College, or derived from books, was applied in the field. The notes taken in the classes of Natural History and Botany bear frequent references to his own observations, sometimes corroborating, often contradicting, theoretical statements of Jameson and Graham. Among his summer notes at this period are observations on the zoology, geology, botany, and meteorology of his native district. He records the dates of the arrival and departure of the summer and winter birds of passage, and speculates on the causes of migration. He specifies the spots in the neighbourhood, or around Edinburgh, where rare birds have been met with, and wishes to find out if there be "a law determining the appearance of stragglers, as well as of the birds which regularly visit this country at particular seasons." He refers to facts which show that the swallow is in Northern Africa in October, in the south of England in April, and at Bathgate on the first week of May. With reference to the woodcock, he asks, "Is it true that the males arrive here before the females?" By noting the space over which different birds fly in a given time, he determines the velocity, with the view of showing how long a short-winged bird, like the woodcock, would take to reach our shores from its summer haunts. He criticises the views of Jameson and Munro on the phenomena of torpidity, in the light of what he had seen in the case of the hedgehog. Jameson's geological lectures, and his own reading in the same department, are taken as guides to unravel the structure of the Bathgate hills, but not with much success. He is much more at home with the phenomena of organic than with those of inorganic forms. His highest powers of observation come into play, when he has to do with the presence of life and its varied manifestations. Even his antiquarian notes illustrate this. He passes at once from the things, to the thoughts and feelings of the

men associated with them. The use of birds to the farmer and the gardener is more than once referred to. In his notes on the weather, he compares its changes with the habits of certain birds and the appearances of certain plants, with the view of finding natural prognostics, which might serve when a barometer could not be conveniently consulted. He concludes that the quantity of air in the air-cells of birds, and the electric properties of their down, should make them excellent weather-prophets. Having become satisfied that the reason why "sea-gulls leave the water and move inland, uttering irregular cries, is that the fishes on the approach of a storm go into deep water, and hence the gull is forced to seek food on land," he leaves this aspect of indication for the safer one—the behaviour of the barometer compared with atmospheric appearances on the Bathgate hills. Not in youth only but throughout his whole life, he showed the keenest relish for

> "The charms which Nature to her votary yields."

Like Leighton, he had "a supernatural delight in natural things:"

> "In starry heavens, at the midnight hour,
> In ever-varying hues at morning's dawn,
> In the fair bow athwart the falling shower,
> In forest, river, lake, rock, hill, and lawn."

David Simpson died in January 1830. When James received tidings of his father's illness he hastened home, and for several weeks watched tenderly and patiently by his bed. His death occurred at a critical point in his son's studies. He was about to go in for Surgeon's degree, but his reading was now interrupted, and he was afraid he would be "plucked." But for "Sandy's encouragement," and his assurance that he only among the relatives would know if he were to fail, he would have delayed for a year. His fears were groundless. Having passed with ease and credit, he became a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, before he was nineteen years of age. Being too young to offer himself for the

degree of Doctor of Medicine, he left Edinburgh for a season. His brother Alexander's house was now the home to which he was ever welcome, and where he was regarded with great esteem and affection. Alexander describes him at this period as "ever busy; fond of wandering about the Bathgate hills in search of stones and plants; assisting Dr. Dawson, the local practitioner, by visiting his patients, or by sorting his laboratory," to whose bottles, labelled by Simpson's hand, the country doctor afterwards used to point with pride. A good deal of time was also profitably spent with his friend Dr. Girdwood of Falkirk, a most genial man, and a popular and skilful practitioner. But he felt all this to be only pleasant idling, and longed for work. At his request, his brother John wrote to Mr. Walter Grindlay, merchant, Liverpool, on the 3d June 1830:—"I understand from my brother, at Grangemouth, that he had mentioned to you some time ago, that our youngest brother, James, had studied Medicine, and wished to get to be surgeon of a ship going out a voyage of twelve or fifteen months. He has been five years studying at the College of Edinburgh, and passed surgeon in April last. His ultimate intention at present is to take a degree as physician, and practise somewhere in Scotland or England; but he cannot obtain that till he is twenty-one, and he is only nineteen this month. As to his medical proficiency I am no judge, but a friend of mine, Mr. Dawson, surgeon here, speaks favourably of him, and I know he is a good scholar, steady, upright, and attentive, and I think would be a good surgeon of a ship. He will require to attend the College another session before taking a degree, and his great anxiety at present is to procure a situation which will yield him a little, and where he can at same time see some practice. He is the youngest of us all, and a favourite, and we would be averse to his going in a ship designed for any unhealthy shore, but if you thought your extensive influence could procure him the situation of surgeon in an East Indiaman, or any ship sailing somewhere in that quarter for twelve or fifteen months, I would take it most particularly kind,

and hope you will keep him in view should you hear of any suitable situation."

In 1831 he returned to College, and, in addition to University class-work, became first assistant to Dr. Gairdner in Dispensary work, to which he gave himself with earnestness and assiduity. To Dr. Gairdner he ever felt indebted for his great attention and kindness, and for much valuable information. In April 1831, Dr. Gairdner, after indicating the kind of work required from a principal assistant, wrote, "I have myself been so much satisfied with Mr. Simpson's abilities and pains in the discharge of those arduous duties, that I have, on some occasions, had no hesitation of requesting him to attend for myself, and also on some of my private patients. . . . His abilities and attention promise the most flattering expectations."

In 1831 his brother David began business at Stockbridge, Edinburgh, and James boarded with him for some time. In 1832 he received the degree of Doctor of Medicine. His Thesis, or Inaugural Dissertation, was on Death from Inflammation.[1] Many years after he thus referred to this period: "'Tis fully forty years since I came first to Edinburgh, and entered its University as a very, very young and very solitary, very poor and almost friendless student. . . . Nor was my original ambition in any way very great. After obtaining my surgical diploma I became a candidate for a situation in the west of Scotland, for the attainment of which I fancied I possessed some casual local interest. The situation was surgeon to the small village of Inverkip, on the Clyde. When not selected, I felt perhaps a deeper amount of chagrin and disappointment than I have ever experienced since that date. If chosen, I would probably have been working there as a village doctor still. But like many other men I have, in relation to my whole fate in life, found strong reason to recognise the mighty fact that assuredly

> 'There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Roughhew them as you will.'

[1] *De Causa Mortis in quibusdam Inflammationibus proxima.*

Yes, in the language of the French proverb, 'Man proposes, but God disposes.' Through the ceaseless love and kindness of a dear elder brother, and in consequence of gaining the Stewart University Bursary, I was enabled to study for some time longer at the University, and obtain my medical degree." On another occasion he wrote: "In November 1829 I commenced my Obstetric studies by entering as a pupil of Dr. Hamilton's class. In April 1830 I received, at the age of eighteen, the diploma of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. During the subsequent winter and summer sessions of 1830-31, I attended three courses of the very excellent and practical lectures of Dr. Thatcher."

Mr. Simpson's five years of student life, 1825 to 1830, were crowded with public events of universal interest. When in after days he met on equal footing with some of the chief actors in these, the turn conversation invariably took showed how much influence they had had on him when at the University classes. His early association with Dr. Macarthur could not fail to make him acquainted with the literary and political movements of the time. Macarthur was a man of public spirit, fond of literature, and one who ever regarded it an honour and a privilege to be able to speak to men through the press. The Scottish Liberal political party was growing in strength and influence, venturing to assert its claims and make them respected, and showing a steady determination to put an end to that system of repression under which it had long been held. The Edinburgh Review was doing much to rally around the Whigs most of the rising young men of promise. And the Scotsman newspaper was carrying everywhere over the land the tidings of the revived opinions, and encouraging the people to make their voice heard in the government of the country. Though the Author of Waverley stood under another banner, his writings had a decided reflex influence in the same direction. Jeffrey, Moncreiff, Cockburn, and other foremost men in literature and politics, were working with great vigour and success. Chalmers,

Andrew Thomson, Sir H. Moncreiff, and Thomas M'Crie, were doing much to keep the ecclesiastical mind of Scotland abreast of public movements, and to lead the Church to look impartially at public questions, to acknowledge their influence on her own work, and to try to control, or at least to guide them. In Mr. Simpson's jottings and notes at this period, are many proofs that he was keenly alive to the circumstances of the times. Then, indeed, began that warm interest which he ever afterwards took in non-professional, social, scientific, and literary movements, and which formed such a marked feature of the efforts of his mature years.

Within the University itself there was not much to meet the views of young men of original thought, or men with desires and capacity for earnest work. From the Arts' classes Playfair, Dugald Stewart,[1] and Thomas Brown had passed away. John Wilson, indeed, was in his prime, attracting to his person and work many whom he smote with the love of study: not, it may be, giving them much moral philosophy, but atoning for this defect by communicating strong intellectual impulse. Sir William Hamilton was quietly toiling[2] in a department in which he had no influence, and where those great powers had no scope, which afterwards, in the Logic class, mastered so many minds, leading them to revere their teacher and to love his work. The respectable men in the Medical Faculty were, with the exception of Alison, very unlike those who were about to occupy their chairs —Christison (1832), Syme (1833), Charles Bell (1836), Simpson (1840), Miller (1842), Goodsir (1846), Bennett (1848), and Edward Forbes (1854).

[1] Retired, 1810; died, 1828.

[2] 1821 to 1836.

CHAPTER III.

John Reid's opinion of Dr. Simpson—Desire for Remunerative Work —Assistant to Professor Thomson—Views of Professional Work— Attractive Personal Qualities — Conscious Ability — Methods of Study—Haller's Dissertation—His Brother's Love—Royal Medical and Royal Physical Societies—Continental Tour, 1835—Visit to London—London Hospitals and Physicians—London Hospitality— Havre — Paris Hospitals — Alfort — Charenton — Namur — Liège — Professor Fohmann — Brussels — Antwerp — Ghent — Ostend— Liverpool—Mr. Grindlay's.

"After finishing his literary studies at the University," wrote Dr. Simpson's friend, Dr. John Reid, "he entered upon his medical education with the same zeal and persevering industry which have always formed so prominent a part of his character; and the facility and rapidity with which he mastered the rudimentary part of his professional studies—as I can vouch from the most ample experience—was such as was to be expected from those qualities, when conjoined with his high mental endowments. When Dr. Simpson presented himself for graduation, the excellence of his Inaugural Dissertation attracted the attention of Professor Thomson, to whom he was at that time personally unknown, and induced that gentleman to request his assistance in his professional studies." During the last session of his medical course, he earnestly desired such an appointment in town or country as would at once bring him a moderate competency. His unsuccessful application for the situation of parish doctor at Inverkip led him to reconsider his plans. The liberality of his brothers was large, hearty, and ungrudging, but he began to be dissatisfied with his own dependent position,

and to look around him for remunerative work—not now, however, on shipboard or in the country. He had resolved to remain in town at all hazards, and to earn a livelihood by the practice of his profession, while devoting himself to the study of medical science, in the centre of Scottish thought and social influence.

Mr. Grindlay, to whom application had been made in 1830 for a surgeonship on board a merchant vessel, asked him to apply for the situation of surgeon to "The Betsey" of Liverpool, telling him at the same time that he was sure to be appointed. After refusing with "sincere and heartfelt thanks," he added, "In taking my degree here last summer, I had the good fortune to attract the notice of Dr. John Thomson, a physician of the greatest eminence, who was then looking out for a person to assist him. He offered me this situation, wholly unsolicited and altogether unexpected on my part. I entered into it in July last, and, having a moderate salary, I enjoy every conceivable advantage for cultivating the most perfect knowledge of my profession, and am used in most respects as one of his own family."

Dr. Thomson's offer was thus most opportune. The money difficulty was taken out of the way. He had now both work and wages. His salary of £50 a year seemed at first a lavish provision, and for a time he made it suffice for all his wants. His work under Dr. Thomson was altogether to his taste. Referring to it afterwards he said, "Professor Thomson, to whom I was then personally unknown, but to whose advice and guidance I subsequently owed a boundless debt of gratitude, happened accidentally to have allotted to him my graduation thesis. He approved of it, engaged me as his assistant, and hence, in brief, I came to settle down a citizen of Edinburgh, and fight amongst you a hard and uphill battle of life for bread and name and fame." It was while acting as assistant to the Professor of Pathology, that he resolved to give himself specially to the study of Obstetric medicine. Referring to his assistantship he says, "It was at an early part of that period (1831 to

1836) that, at Dr. Thomson's urgent suggestion and advice, I first turned my attention more especially to the study of Midwifery, with the view of becoming a teacher of this department of medical science."

With characteristic promptness, energy, and earnestness, he began to seek distinction in the scientific literature of the department of his choice. Even his earliest papers, as, for example, that on Diseases of the Placenta, attracted the attention of eminent men both in this country and on the Continent. It was translated into German by Dr. Simon and Dr. Heinshal of Berlin; into Italian by Dr. Chelioni of Milan; and into French by a writer in the *Gazette Médieale de Paris.* The writer was honoured by the foremost men everywhere, except in his own country and his own city. These papers were at once accepted by most as indicating much preparation for his special work, and as full of promise of good fruits in this and in other departments of medical science. He brought to the profession of physician a combination of qualities seldom found in one man. It was the profession of his early and deliberate choice—his first love—to which, from 1827, he gave all that vigour of mind, warmth of heart, freshness of feeling, and earnestness of effort, which deep, strong natures alone can render. Then his ideal was pure and high. When he came afterwards to speak to others touching this, his words well describe his own views at this period. "The profession is," he said, "in many respects, the most important secular profession which a man can follow. Its importance depends on the priceless value of the objects of the physician's constant care and study, viz., the guardianship of the health and of the lives of our brother men, and the defence of the human body and human mind against the attacks and effects of disease. Other pursuits become insignificant in their objects when placed in contrast with this. The agriculturist bestows all his professional care and study on the rearing of crops and cattle; the merchant spends his energies and attention on his goods and his commissions; the engineer upon his iron wheels

and rails; the sailor upon his ships and freights; the banker upon his bills and his bonds; and the manufacturer on his spindles and their products. But what, after all, are machinery and merchandise, shares and stocks, consols and prices-current, or the rates of cargoes and cattle, of corns and cottons, in comparison with the inestimable value and importance of the health and the very lives of those fellow-men who everywhere move, and breathe, and speak, and act around us? What are any, or what are all of these objects, when contrasted with the most precious and valued gift of God to earth—human life? And what would not the greatest and most successful followers of such varied callings give out of their own professional stores for the restoration of health, and for the prolongation of life—if the first were once lost to them, or if the other were merely menaced by the dreaded and blighting finger of disease?" Again, "Nature has happily ordained it as one of the great laws on which she has founded our moral happiness, that the performance of the love and kindness to others should be a genuine and never-failing source of pleasure to our own hearts. It is thus strictly as well as poetically true,

'That, seeking others' good, we find our own.'

The exercise of the profession is, when followed out in its proper spirit, a continued realization of active beneficence, and in this view a continued source of moral satisfaction and happiness to the generous heart. The objects and powers of your art are alike great and elevated. Your aim is, as far as possible, to alleviate human suffering and lengthen out human existence. Your ambition is to gladden as well as to prolong the course of human life, by warding off disease as the greatest of mortal evils, and restoring health, and even at times reason itself, as the greatest of mortal blessings. If I may borrow the beautiful language of the author of The Village—

'Glorious your aim,—to ease the labouring heart,
To war with death, and stop his flying dart;
To trace the source whence the fierce contest grew,
And life's short lease on easier terms renew;

> To calm the phrenzy of the burning brain,
> And heal the tortures of imploring pain ;
> Or, when more powerful ills all efforts brave,
> To ease the victim no device can save,
> And smooth the stormy passage to the grave.'

I repeat it,—if you follow these, the noble objects of your profession, in a proper spirit of love and kindness to your race, the pure light of benevolence will shed around the path of your toils and labours the brightness and beauty that will cheer you onwards, and keep your steps from being weary in well-doing—while, if you practise the art that you profess with a cold-hearted view to its results merely as a matter of lucre and trade, your course will be as dark and miserable as that low and grovelling love that dictates it." Or again, "We despatch you as Argonauts across the rough sea of life—not in search of a shadowy golden fleece, but with a far higher and holier commission, viz., to carry hence the rich and blessed gifts of medicine to all ends of the habitable globe ; to give, as humble agents under a Higher Power, ease to the agonized, rest to the sleepless, strength to the weak, health to the sick, and sometimes life to the dying ; to distribute everywhere freely a knowledge of those means that are best fitted to defend our fellow-man against the assault of disease, and to quench within him the consuming fire of sickness."[1]

Dr. Simpson's great intellectual gifts, love of study, and greed of knowledge, were not less marked than his high professional ideal. That concentrative faculty by which, when a boy, he could read without distraction, amid the bustle of a room in his father's house which served both as kitchen and shop, had been growing in strength, and was soon to be much needed, and have full scope in a higher sphere. Of incalculable benefit to himself, he was ever anxious to commend its cultivation to others. "To make decided and useful progress in our professional calling and pursuits as physicians, we must have a perfect power of fixing at will those fluttering spirits of thought, and of steadily steering

[1] *Physicians and Physic.*

that 'restless thing,' the mind, in whatever direction we may desire. At all times, on all occasions, and amidst all the numerous disturbing influences to which the medical man is so constantly subjected, he should be able to control and command his undivided mental attention to the case or object that he may have before him. In the prosecution of any department of science, as well as in the practice of any department of art, which, like medicine, requires a constant exercise of observation, reflection, and judgment, the power and habit of closely and continuously thinking upon the subject in hand, to the exclusion, for the time, of all other subjects, is one of the principal, if not the principal, secret of success. In the power of concentrating, and keeping concentrated, all the energies of attention and thought upon any given subject, consists the power of thinking soundly, strongly, and successfully upon that subject. The possession or the want of this quality of the mind constitutes the main distinction between the possession or the want of what the world designates 'mental abilities and talents.'" In commendation of work and diligence he adds—"Sir Isaac Newton, whose gigantic genius and intellectual strength have fixed upon him the admiration and wonder of his race, modestly averred that his mental superiority, if any, consisted, in his own opinion, only of unusual powers of patient thought and industry. The unparalleled greatness in the results of his thoughts was owing, according to his own interpretation, merely to his habit of unparalleled endurance and assiduity in the exercise of thinking. With probably more truth, Dr. Armstrong observed, that 'genius in a medical man is nothing more than the *habit* of patient observation and reflection.' This habit of strong mental attention and concentrated mental activity is one which all should struggle diligently to increase and improve."

The personal qualities which, even in his childhood, had drawn to James Simpson the affections of many, which in boyhood had led his school-fellows to give him their little confidences, or share with him their cares, and which, when a student, often

led his fellows to impart to him their secrets, or to seek his advice, had grown with his growth. He knew the value of this quality, and owned the responsibility it brought. "In some professions and occupations, man's principal duty is to *think;* in others his principal duty is to *do.* The practice of physic and surgery calls for the constant and resolute exercise of both qualities—of thought alike and of action. It is, however, the part of a medical practitioner, not only to be ready to think and act for the relief and cure of his patients, but also to feel for them in their sorrow and suffering. An unsympathizing physician is a physician bereft of one of the most potent agencies of treatment and of cure. He knows not, and practises not, the whole extent of his art, when he recklessly neglects and eschews the marvellous influence of mind over body. For sometimes kindly and cheering words or looks from the physician are to the patient of more real worth than all his physic—

> 'Sunt verba et voces, quibus hunc lenire dolorem
> Possis, et magnam morbi deponere partem.'

They secure the sick man's confidence and gratitude; they rouse his hopes and courage; and they even intensify the good effects of the physician's more direct therapeutic measures. Yes, let all cultivate to the uttermost the steady manliness of hand and head which our profession so urgently demands, but do not despise that gentle womanliness of heart which the sick in their depression and pain so often look for, and long for, and profit by. Be to every man his beloved as well as his trusted physician." He believed that the best way to win from patients a full knowledge of their case was to win their confidence. The statement of their feelings came thus to guide his diagnosis. He began work possessing, in a very high degree, the art of disposing those he met to tell him all they knew. His patients got the benefit of this; but others, variously attracted to make his acquaintance, have been heard to complain that, before they left him, he had made all their information his own. But he was not contented to know only what others knew. His wonderfully active mind, even

when a student, was ever in search of new facts, and ever trying to set old facts in new relations. He speculated, theorized, or took to strange ways of doing common things ; but in all it was clear his ruling motive was the good of others. He wished to become, and to be known as, a benefactor of the human race. His own part in the work was, however, always something in his eyes. He had not, he never had, the affectation to allege that he was nothing in the matter, or that his part in bringing it about should be studiously concealed. The ten talents had been given to him, and he knew it. Thus his earnest and persistent effort. He was resolved that no good thing of all that God had given should fall uselessly to the ground. But the consciousness of the possession of rich natural gifts, never hid from him the fact that his own will and work were important factors in determining success. Unwillingness to believe in the gifts is the napkin in which many tie up their Lord's money. They are spoken of as men of good parts, if they only knew it. Shirking their responsibilities under the plea of humility, they pass away, leaving the world worse than it would have been had they not lived. Now this consciousness of power, which seeks expression often only in the desire to please friends, or leads to effort on behalf of others, from, it may be, no higher motive than to earn name and fame thereby, is far removed from that self-centred and self-seeking disposition whose chief features are egotism, meanness, and vanity. "James," said his sister Mary to him in 1834, "you are working too hard, and hurting your health." "Well, I am sure," he replied in a serious way, "it 's just to please you all."

His method of study was purely inductive. Even his first important paper shows how rigidly this method guided him. In approaching any subject in the literature of his profession, his first task was to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the views and opinions of others ; his second to test these by facts which had come under his own observation. In the MS. of one of his early papers there are nearly one hundred references to the

literature of the subject—many of them to works not likely to be known by any one not smitten with bibliomania. This we shall see more fully as we proceed. But in his case there was no parade of authorities he had not consulted, and no marshalling of the ancients, as if they only had spoken and contemporary workers had not. It was his custom to consult authorities at first hand, and, when not familiar with the language in which a work was written, to ask an adept to make search for him. He ever recognised the importance of honest literary work. The views and alleged discoveries of the men of other days, were either foundations on which to build or rubbish to be cleared away. In either case they had to be known. As an antiquary everything old and remote had ever a potent charm for him. But the influence of archæological tastes was kept in check and balance by his love for what is fresh and new. From the outset of his professional life he sat loose to authority and to traditional modes of treatment, and no man was readier to welcome new light from any source.

> "Nunquam ita quisquam bene subductâ ratione ad vitam fuit
> Quin res, ætas, usus, semper aliquid apportet novi,
> Aliquid moneat; ut illa quæ te scire credas, nescias:
> Et quæ tibi putaris prima, in experiundo repudies."

So early as the second year of his medical curriculum, when Reid and he were reading together the Lausanne edition of Haller's Dissertation on the *Sensible and Irritable Parts of Animals*,—a work abounding in facts, great force of reasoning, and copiousness of induction,—he was ever contrasting the medical art with the science of medicine. Following the former merely for the sake of emolument, the practitioner is apt to become a mere administrator of drugs for the removal of disease. He gives them as others have done before, without any careful study of the nature of the disease for which they are held to be remedies, and without any scientific acquaintance with the part affected or the function interfered with. Principles more than remedies bulk in the view of the student of the science of

medicine. Thus a truly scientific spirit ever influences the accomplished physician, and gives dignity to his work. With his intimate knowledge of the human body, he has a firm belief in the reparative powers of nature, and his efforts are to remove hindrances, in order that the living organs may themselves work the cure—a result not unfrequently gained by regulating diet and dispensing with drugs. With such views and feelings, and thus furnished for his profession, Dr. Simpson stood on the threshold of his life-work in 1832.

His visits to Bathgate were now less frequent. Changes had taken place among his relatives. Alexander, his favourite brother, and Mary, his sister, were both married in 1832. But there was no abatement of Alexander's devoted love—a love in which Janet Russell, his young and thoughtful wife, fully sympathized. Dr. Simpson soon came to regard her with great affection, and to confide to her his cares and his hopes. He still looked on Alexander's house as his home, and Alexander's purse was still free to him. So anxious had this brother been to prevent any interruption of James's residence in the University city, that, when the cholera appeared in the Bathgate district, he executed a deed in his favour, by which a provision was secured to "his dear James," in the event of his death. "I trust," he said, "every one of you will look to him. But I daresay every one of you has a pleasure in doing him good by stealth, as I have had myself."

In 1833 Dr. Simpson became a member of the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh,[1] "an institution which has in very many instances served as an arena both for exhibiting and for strengthening the powers of those who have received their education in the Medical School of Edinburgh." The Records of the Royal Physical Society of Edinburgh,[2] for the same session, bear that "Dr. James Y. Simpson petitioned for a seat in the Royal Physical Society : recommended by Edward Forbes." He was

[1] Instituted 1737; incorporated by Royal Charter 1788.
[2] Instituted 1770; incorporated by Royal Charter 1788.

afterwards elected President, in which office his name became associated with those of Dr. Knox, Captain Thomas Brown, Dr. Greville, Edward Forbes, Dr. George Wilson, John Goodsir, Sir John Graham Dalzell, Dr. John Fleming, Hugh Miller, and other well-known naturalists. More than ten years the senior of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, "The Physical" has had important influences on Scottish Natural Science. Its constitution and management, the conversational and familiar way in which its discussions are carried on, and the kind of work expected from its active members, are well fitted to stimulate and encourage young naturalists, and to guide them into those departments of Natural History for the study of which they may have special aptitude.

Dr. Simpson had for years cherished the desire to visit the chief schools of Medicine and the hospitals of England and France. He also wished to see the eminent men who then adorned the highest branches of his profession. By the ever ready liberality of his brothers, Alexander and John, he was enabled to do this in 1835, in company with his accomplished friend Dr. Douglas Maclagan, now Professor of Medical Jurisprudence in the University of Edinburgh. As he kept a journal during this tour with great regularity and care, we have, in his own words, a pretty full record of his personal and professional views at the time. The journal consists chiefly of professional notes,—as, for example, remarks on preparations and specimens in public and private collections, opinions of modes of treatment of the same disease by different practitioners, notices of operations and the comparative skill of surgeons, and of the condition and management of the hospitals visited. Many of these notes are of scientific value, and reveal a wide and accurate acquaintance with medical science, marvellous in one so young. But as these would be out of place in a biography prepared for general reading, the extracts are limited to the record of the chief stages of his tour, and to matters of general information. During the same tour he wrote frequently, and sometimes at great length, to his

friends in Bathgate. Extracts from these letters are also given below.

"*April* 1*st*.—Went with Dr. M. to visit the London University, and found Dr. Carswell in the Museum. . . . We visited the wards of North London Hospital after leaving Dr. C. The wards are clean and airy, and not over well filled, and containing no individually interesting cases. Liston has treated several cases of iritis without mercury, and none of them have gone wrong. . . . Dr. M. and I dined with Dr. Somerville in the evening. Dr. S. firmly believes in the doctrine of London constitutions not being capable of standing bleeding and antiphlogistic means to any great extent. Speaks of 10, 12, and 16 oz. bleedings as large. Can this general idiosyncrasy (if I may so term it) of the London people depend upon their drinking so much ale, porter, gin, etc.; and ought we not to take a hint from it in the treatment at home of brewers, etc., whose constitutions we often find, even in Scotland, quite incapable of resisting any great injury or disease? . . . Dr. M. and I visited Bartholomew's Hospital and Museum at 12, and remained till 4. We were not in any of the wards, our chief business for the day being with the Museum. . . . Dr. M. and I called on Dr. Lee at half-past 8, who took us down to the Royal Society. The meeting was considered as very full, it being the ballot night. Fifteen new members were balloted for and admitted. By the regulations two-thirds of the members cannot vote in favour of each candidate. One candidate had 34 for and 17 against him. The business went on in a most sombre and lubberly manner, Mr. Childers reading a small part of the papers of the night during each circuit of the ballot-box, and being often stopped in the middle of a sentence till Mr. Lubbock, who was in the chair, announced the result of the vote, and Dr. Roget read over another candidate's application with his tail of qualifications and certifiers. . . . Of medical men there were present Dr. Bostock, Dr. Paris, Brande, Stanley, Earle, Owen, Clift, etc. We went up to the library-hall with Mr. Clift and had a cup of tea. He introduced

us to Earle, who is a smart, clever-looking man. . . . Dr. M. was kind enough to introduce me to Mr. Spence, the entomologist, a very agreeable and plain person. He offered to take us to the Linnæan and Entomological Societies, and invited us to dinner on Tuesday fortnight. His coadjutor, Mr. Kirby, is perhaps to be present. . . . Dr. M. took me with him to call on Longstaff. We are to see his museum on Tuesday. We set off afterwards for St. Thomas's and Guy's Hospitals, and went round the wards of the latter with Mr. Barnsby Cooper. He appears to be a great mercurialist and promoter of the business of the apothecary. . . . *April 4th.*—After breakfast Dr. M. and I called on Dr. Tweedie, and then passed on to St. Bartholomew's, and went over the remaining part of the Museum. . . . . *April 5th.*—We breakfasted with Mr. Stanley of Bartholomew's, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. There were several of his pupils present. . . . He is a short man, with an immense head (external head I mean). . . . *April 6th.*—Went to visit Westminster and the Surrey Zoological Gardens. . . . One of the lions has *cataract* in both eyes—a lioness in one of hers—and I think a leopard, or ocelot, is similarly affected. One of the monkeys coughed severely—is it consumption? Those in the Jardin des Plantes are said to die generally of phthisis. . . . . *April 7th.*—I have spent this day most agreeably, and I hope profitably. Dr. M. and I breakfasted shortly after 8, and then set off for the Moorfields Eye Dispensary and Infirmary. . . . Both Mr. Tyrrell and Mr. MacMurdo showed a wonderful degree (to me at least) of what Dr. M. terms the '*visus cruditus.*' A single glance, and one question or two, seemed to enable them to form their diagnosis, in cases even the most complicated. Their system of treatment seems to be based on the most rational therapeutic principles. . . . We afterwards proceeded to Mr. Longstaff's to view his museum. The collection consists of healthy and comparative anatomy, as well as of morbid structures (the pathological part being the largest and most valuable). Altogether this is a most splendid collection.

His preparations, he says, now amount to 11,000. . . . On coming homewards I stept into St. Paul's. There the immensity of the scale on which the building is constructed, as well as the nobleness of the architecture, and particularly the size and beauty of the central arch and dome, impress the stranger with the truth inscribed on the tombstone of Sir C. Wren—that the building itself is the most splendid possible monument to the talents of the architect. After dining in a coffee-room opposite to the *Lancet* office, I went to the House of Commons. . . . I got a seat in the first row of the Strangers' Gallery, and heard a number of the first guns speak—as Russell, Lushington, Gisborne, Morpeth, Perrin, Peel, Baring, Spring Rice, etc. etc. The motion discussed was proposed by Lord John Russell, and embraced the principle, that no Irish Church Reform Bill which was not founded upon the legality of the appropriation of the surplus tithes to the purposes of education would satisfy the House. Peel's speech was particularly clever, and even affecting. . . .

"We afterwards called on Messrs. Clift and Owen at Lincoln's Inn Fields. I was glad to hear from Mr. Owen that he now, from recent investigations, conceived the Hunters to be perfectly right in regard to the structure of the Placenta, and Lee wrong.

"*April 10th.*—This forenoon we visited Bethlehem Hospital. Mr. T., the person who hurried us over the building, is a most dumb, uncommunicative fellow, and we could fish little or nothing out of him in regard to the particulars of the institution, the treatment employed, or anything else. . . . There seem to be too many iron bolts about the windows and rooms, and too little of the 'moral' employed. I wrote a long letter to David in the afternoon, dined at six at Dr. Somerville's with Drs. Maclagan, Broughton, and Webster, and went to a party at Mr. Spence's, the entomologist, at ten. How different is the drawling and simpering through a lazy French quadrille from the excitement of a guid blithe Scotch reel or country dance!

. . . *Monday, April 13th.*—This morning we breakfasted with Dr. Lee, in Golden Square, at half-past eight. We afterwards looked in at the Middlesex Hospital, and proceeded onwards from thence to the North London infirmary, where I had two or three moments' conversation with Mr. Liston. . . .

"*April 16th.*—We then stepped across to the London Small-pox Hospital, where we were lucky enough to find Dr. G. just about to begin his visit. He said we could not have come at a better time to see good cases. Dr. G. is a man who seems to think himself comparatively as deeply initiated in the mysteries of small-pox over his brothers in physic, as in point of stature he overtops most of his fellow-mortals. I hate the self-sufficient smirk of his mouth. . . .

"*April 18th.*—I called on Dr. J. at twelve, and took him to see Bartholomew's. We went round first with Earle, and secondly with Lawrence. I had merely been introduced by Dr. M. to Mr. Lawrence, and he had only seen me about half a minute a fortnight ago, yet he both recognised and named me. I wish I had such a memory."

"Coffee-room, Globe Inn, Chatham,
19*th April* 1835.

"My dear Sandy,—As Dr. Maclagan has begun writing to Edinburgh, I think I may as well employ myself for half-an-hour before retiring to bed with a report of my progress since I last wrote to Bathgate. We came down here to-day in order to see the great military hospitals and museums. It was a most delightful forenoon, and our ride through Kent was altogether charming. . . . We were down here by two o'clock, and then walked up to Fort Pitt to see Dr. Clarke, the Inspector-General of Hospitals, to whom we had introductions. Dr. C. kindly invited us to dine and spend the evening with him and his family. We have just returned (ten o'clock) to our inn, after having passed the evening very agreeably. An old lady of the family, the mother of Mrs. Clarke, was particularly pathetic in relating over and over to me a story which my

father used often to tell, of an old captain (a friend of the Steels, was he not?) who had his jaw shot away, and was in consequence obliged to be fed afterwards with a spoon. . . .

"*London*, 21*st April*.—Well, here we are back again in London, after having enjoyed ourselves immensely at Chatham. We had a very happy mess yesterday. Twelve doctors sat down to dinner, and I am sure I will not soon forget Dr. and Mrs. Clarke's kindness. We had not time to land either at Woolwich or Greenwich on our way up the river. On arriving at Panton Square, I was delighted to find John's long and welcome letter awaiting me. Do write me often. You cannot guess how I weary at times to hear from some of you. Before I received Mary's very kind letter last week, I was getting utterly uneasy, thinking something must be wrong, that none of you had written. Dr. M. and I met a very agreeable but small party of naturalists at dinner at Mr. Spence's this evening. We all adjourned to the Linnæan Society about eight o'clock. The Duke of Somerset was in the chair, and, honest man! fell sound asleep during the reading of the paper; so sound, indeed, that he was with difficulty roused by the secretary after the paper was finished, and when it was necessary for him to speak a few words in order to adjourn the meeting. . . . I shall leave London with the impression of having spent a most happy and instructive month of my life in it. I shall write what more I recollect that may interest you to-morrow. It is near one in the morning, and I am exceedingly sleepy with my day's work and travel; so, with kindest respects to Janet and Mary, and to the two Johns, and with my best love for little David and Mary, I remain, my dear Sandy, ever most affectionately yours,

"JAMES Y. SIMPSON.

"*P.S.—Wednesday morning*, 8 *o'clock*.—I am already, through your kindness and John's, so amply supplied with money that I do not think I shall have any need whatever for the additional

£50 which Mary and John speak of in their letters; but many, many, many thanks for the very kind manner in which you offer to put it at my disposal, and for the kind remarks which John puts in his letter respecting the money I drew from Mr. Hope.

"Do write me on receipt of this.—J. Y. S."

"*April 23d and 24th.*—I have spent both of these days from eleven to four in minutely examining the preparations of morbid structure in the museum at Guy's. . . . On Friday evening I came home after dinner, dressed, and set off again for the east end of the town, to a semi-Scotch, semi-Cockney party at Mr. and Mrs. A's. Mr. A. treated his London friends to abundance of good Scotch toddy, and none of them thought of leaving his domicile till three in the morning. I returned at that early hour along Cheapside, Ludgate Hill, Fleet Street, Strand, etc.; no country village could present so quiescent a state as London at that hour did. I hate such late sittings.

"*April 25th.*—. . . . Dr. M. and I set off in an omnibus for Camden Hill, to dine with Sir James Macgregor and family. Sir James has still a considerable dash of the 'Scot' about him, is exceedingly plain and homely in his manners, and at the same time exceedingly kind and agreeable. Of his family—why, in regard to them, I am sure, that if domestic happiness reigns anywhere on earth, 'one would expect to find it here.' Every one seems to think each other's happiness a much more important point than his own, and every one finds happiness, the truest happiness, for himself, in attempting to attain this end for others. Camden Hill is itself a very lovely place for a domicile. . . .

"*May 3d, Sun Inn Coffee-room, Southampton.*—This morning I was up shortly after 6, and by 20 minutes to 8 I was deposited with my trunk and bag upon the top of the Southampton coach, in Piccadilly. The morning promised well, though there were a few heavy clouds in the sky. The ride as far as Windsor Park was delightful, and from the top of the coach we had two or

three most lovely glimpses of English scenery. After passing Windsor the soil was rather inferior in many parts, and we passed every now and then large tracts of heath. From Winchester, the old capital of England, to Southampton, the scenery and soil improved; the suburbs of Southampton are quite charming, and Southampton itself is a very pretty town. The whole scenery of the road was much more wooded than the generality of scenery in Scotland. The neatness and cleanliness of the English cottages is greatly superior to all that we have in Scotland,—the little patches of garden ground before, behind, and around them set them off amazingly. I wish the Scotch peasantry could, by some means or other, be excited to a little more love of cleanliness and horticulture. I did not see above two or three dirty windows, men, or women, along the whole line of road. The snow-white smockfrocks of the Hampshire peasantry do actually look well, in my opinion.

"*May 5th.*—Yesterday I found myself on board the 'Camilla,' and sailing down the Southampton water by twelve o'clock. The morning was beautiful, but it grew more clouded as we left the harbour. The vessel ran into the mouth of Portsmouth harbour, where several passengers joined us, amongst others my *compagnon de voyage*. The company on board was partly French, partly English. I never before saw so well the verification of the remark, that speaking French consists 'in making mouths,' and it was easy to point out all our French party, individually, by observing, from even the greatest distance, how much they used their poor hard-worked 'orbicularis oris.' Our voyage to Havre was, on the whole, very favourable. The sunset was magnificent, and the appearance of the Channel by moonlight was equally grand. I shall not soon forget the sight, and the soothing feelings to which that sight gave rise, when I came on deck about eleven o'clock, and lay down upon one of the benches to admire the scene. We reached Havre about 1 o'clock in the morning. . . . We took a walk along some parts of the fortifications, and climbed up to the heights above Havre,—an operation,

by the by, which cost me a pair of boots, as one of my London pair was rent for nearly three inches in this ascent. . . .

"*Thursday.*—Yesterday morning I was up before five. After dressing and arranging our luggage, we got a cup of coffee and two nearly raw eggs. We were not exactly finished with these articles when the conducteur of the Paris 'Diligence' summoned us down. . . .

"*Paris, Monday.*—Drs. M., Sloane, and I followed for a short time this morning Lisfranc (a French reprint of Liston), Louis, and Andral in their cliniques at La Pitié. . . .

"The room in which the Institute meets is extremely neat, though not gaudy. M. Dupin was in the chair, with Arago on his right hand, and Flourens on his left. M. Edwards read a short paper on Polypi, and Dumas described a new instrument. The utmost silence was maintained during the meeting, and when it offered to be broken, the ringing of a hand-bell by Flourens sufficed to restore it. . . ."

"Hotel de l'Université, 22 Rue de l'Université,
Saturday, May 10th, 1835.

"My dear Janet,—Here I am at last in Paris, and I have just left Dr. M. in the Museum of the School of Medicine, to come home, and write you how I get on in this new scene. I believe you will be by this time informed by the letter which I wrote Walter Gilchrist from Havre, that I had had a very pleasant ride from London to Southampton, and a very pleasant passage from Southampton to Havre. Of course everything in Havre was new and striking, and the town itself being a very neatly built Norman one, we spent a very agreeable day in it, and amongst other things saw a turn-out of the inhabitants upon the quays to witness the embarkment of Mr. Livingston, the American ambassador. The coifs or head-dresses of some of the ladies would have surprised you, I am sure : at least they did surprise me. Many of them had no such things as bonnets on, but a cap as high, or even higher, than a sugar-loaf, made of muslin and lace, and as white as the driven snow. We could get no

conveyance to Rouen or Paris till next morning, when by a quarter to six we found ourselves seated in the back part of the Paris diligence or stage-coach. I have called it a stage-coach, but it is at the same time much more like one of the heavy Edinburgh and Glasgow waggons. It is divided internally into three compartments—the first holding three persons, facing the horses, the second containing six, and the third containing four. It was in this last that Dr. M. and I were placed, our companions being a man going to Rouen, and a peasant girl on her way, like ourselves, to Paris. We travelled, in despite of the lubberly construction of the machine, at the rate of nearly eight miles an hour, being drawn sometimes by five horses, and during other stages by six, seven, and eight. Every declivity in the road we descended at a thundering rate, a rate which would have astonished an English coachman, and at one part of the road, where we met an opposition diligence, we had a capital gallop down an incline more than a mile in length. We reached Rouen between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, saw the gorgeous Church of St. Anthony, the Cathedral, the statue of Joan of Arc, etc. (all of which, by the by, are, I believe, figured in the *Penny Magazine*), dined at the table-d'hôte on soups, boiled beef, veal, mutton, cow-brains, fish, salads, etc., and set off again about six.

"Now, as to Paris itself, let me say in two words, that I have already seen much to wonder at and admire in it, and I have much more still to see. . . . I daresay you will be astonished when I tell you that our coffee-pot was not a whit larger than a 'half-mutchkin-stoup,' and yet out of this pot we made four excellent cups of coffee, the cups being at the same time nearly twice or three times larger than those in Britain! . . . Well, but to return from this digression about coffee-pots. . . . I hope to hear from some of you next week at farthest, and expect some NEWS in the letter; and with kindest respects to Mary, Sandy, the two Johns, and all the young folks, as well as to your mother and the Misses Wardrop, I remain, ever very affectionately yours, JAMES Y. SIMPSON."

"*May 14th, Hôpital des Invalides.*—This Hospital seems to be a noble institution, whether viewed externally or internally. One of the wards through which we passed is the longest and most elegant I ever saw. The bed-curtains are of an ochre colour; in the other hospitals they are white. We found the old Baron Larry seated in a small room off one of the wards, showing some of the most interesting cases which were to be found among the returns in the hospital to two youngish medical friends, and ever and anon impressing the doctrines he was laying down by a blow of his elbow on the one nearest him. . . .

"*May 20th.*—We followed Lisfranc this morning in the wards of La Pitié, and afterwards heard him deliver his clinical lecture. He lectures with great clearness, and I understood more of his French than of almost any of the other Parisians. On our return from the Pitié we called upon M. Littré, who, with his unshaved beard, uncombed hair, and large old stained surtout, looks the very picture of a translator of Hippocrates. . . .

"In the evening Dr. Moffat and I visited three of the principal gambling-houses—sights not soon to be forgotten!! . . .

"*May 21st.*—Went together to the Hôtel Dieu, where we got our tickets of admission entered. Set out for Alfort on foot. The day proved very hot, although the wind was northerly, and we were obliged to walk most of the road with our coats off. Alfort is altogether a very noble institution. There are about 300 students attending the school at present. . . .

"M. B. appears to be a common-sense man, which most Frenchmen certainly are not. What a number of hobbies are ridden in Paris by different medical men! . . . From twelve to half-past one o'clock we employed in looking over the Gallery of Comparative Anatomy in the Jardin des Plantes. The immense number of bones and skeletons here collected is certainly enormous. . . .

"*May 25th.*—This morning Dr. M. and I set off shortly after eight o'clock for Charenton, where we were to meet Esquirol,

and see the lunatic asylum under his charge. We drove out in a cab, and found Dr. E. going his rounds when we arrived. The establishment altogether is an exceedingly fine one. . . . There were no other appearances of coercive treatment under any form about the establishment, except we consider the confinement of some of the more noisy and restless patients to their cells as such. Yet, as Dr. Esquirol remarked, there had never been any instance of patients endangering the lives of their companions or attendants, a thing generally so much insisted upon by English physicians and writers on Insanity. . .

"*May 27th.*—. . . M. Dubois made remarks of about a quarter of an hour's duration over each patient, the students and himself standing around the bed. I think this system bad. It would, in my opinion, be much preferable to give the clinique in a separate room after the visit, and this would be attended with no disadvantages. But it is very apt to frighten patients to hear their cases discussed at such length by their own bedsides. . . ."

"PARIS, 2*d June* 1835.

"MY DEAR SANDY,—I received your long, long expected letter only on Saturday. . . . The morning I received your letter I had just finished the first page of a most thundering philippic against the laziness of one and all of you, which I was going to send off by the next post; but I gladly threw it aside on receiving your welcome letter, and the very welcome news therein contained. . . . We have got most excellent bread in Paris. It is beautifully white, and costs sixpence the 4 lb. loaf, or rather I should say the 4 lb. roll, for all is in the form of roll from four inches to four and more feet long. They are the most 'unearthly' looking rolls you ever saw. I have never seen a bakehouse, but I saw two bakers emerge from one a few days back; they had only a shirt and a petticoat on, and no such article as trousers. Think only of you stalking about in a coarse white petticoat! . . . With kindest

respects to Janet, Mary, the two J.'s, Dr. Dawson, etc., believe me, yours ever sincerely and most affectionately,

"JAMES Y. SIMPSON."

"*June 7th.*—The evening has been spent in preparing for our journey to-morrow. We leave Paris by the 'diligence' for Mons at six o'clock P.M., and both Dr. M. and I will leave it with the impression that we have been much pleased with our month's sojournment, and we have the satisfaction of reflecting that by working hard during that period, we have seen as much of the French capital as many who have remained months, not to say years in it. Is this vanity, eh? I hope not. . . .

"*June 11th.*—Leaving Namur and its commanding fortress, we drove down the right bank of the Meuse as far as Huy, and then crossed to the other, along which we continued till we reached Liège. The whole route from Namur to Liège is lovely—splendid! The river and the road runs for all that distance, a distance of about forty or fifty miles, between two continuous ridges of bare perpendicular rocks and wooded hills. Every glimpse of the scenery that bursts upon your sight seems lovelier than another. Below Huy, the sides of the hills on the left are covered by vineyards, and many country seats and toppling chateaus are seen ever and anon—things which have rarely greeted our eyes from Paris to this place. But besides being intrinsically beautiful, the long dell which we traversed was interesting in a classic point of view. It is the scene of much of the romance of *Quentin Durward*. Our worthy, active, and intelligent conductor informed me that the name of one of the villages which we were passing was Ardennes, and with as good French as I could muster I informed our guard that I had often read and heard of the forest of Ardennes. I asked him if he knew anything of the story of the Sanglier des Ardennes. 'No,' he very ingenuously replied; 'but I know that Ardennes is far-famed for its moutons!' . . .

"*Liège, June 12th.*—After breakfast we wended our way to

the University, and asked for Professor Fohmann. He was pointed out to us just entering the gate. He walks with a staggering gait (a circumstance which he afterwards informed us was owing to an attack of *tremblement métallique*—from his working for years in making mercurial preparations). He has a German-looking face, patient-like rather than intelligent, or, at least, original. We introduced ourselves as foreign physicians, mentioning at the same time that I had an introduction to his father-in-law, Professor Tiedmann, from Professor Thomson. He received us very well, and took us to hear him lecture. . . . The University hall or lobby enters by two or three different passages into the Botanic Garden, which seems to be pretty extensive and kept in very good order. What an immense advantage this is compared to Edinburgh, where the students must run away some two or three miles before breakfast to hear a lecture or to examine any specimen for himself! At Liège this study of Botany is pressed upon the attention of the student at every vacant hour. At Edinburgh you must *make* one or two vacant hours before you reach and return from the scene of study. . . . In the evening we wandered out to see the town, and ascended the heights above it. . . . The view was gorgeous. We wandered back into the town, which is one of the most beautifully romantic I have seen. . . .

"*Hôtel de Pomelette, Liège, June 13th*, 1835.—And is it possible that I here begin a second volume of a journal? When I began the former volume in London, about two and a half months ago, I had, I must honestly confess, very little prospect of ever seeing it finished. I was sceptical, greatly sceptical, in respect to my own capability of commanding so much regularity and perseverance as to note nightly what 'things by flood and field' happened my travelling-ship daily. Indeed, I began my journal chiefly with some distant prospect of teaching myself the important lesson of 'daily notation.' I am vain enough to flatter myself now that I have, partly at least, suc-

ceeded. At all events that which was at first a sort of task, a considerable and at times rather annoying task, has now become to me a pleasure. If I had my first volume to write over again, I think I could now write it twenty times better —at any rate, I would do it with twenty times more good-will. In writing a journal 'tis needless to think of making no blunders in the way of blots or of bad grammar and crooked sentences. We, or at least *I*, have occasionally felt so confoundedly tired at night, that if I had been obliged to attend to such minutiæ I certainly would not have been able to advance above two sentences—no, not beyond one, if I had ever finished that.—But if I go on with such comments I will only waste some good paper, not to mention ink and my good steel pen. So, taking this as a preface, I begin at the beginning.

"This morning, rose by half-past seven—dressed, breakfasted on coffee and rolls, read the Liège *Courrier*, and by nine o'clock called on Professor Fohmann with a copy of Dr. Reid's paper on the Glands of the Whale, which I had promised him yesterday. The Professor kept us till five minutes to ten, lecturing us on his discoveries upon the original elementary tubular structure of animal tissues. . . .

"Somebody has remarked that no person ever entered into, or at least came out of, the study of the Book of Revelation without being either mad before or mad after it. I would not choose exactly to say that Dr. F.'s case is perfectly analogous, but has it not some analogy? He seems to run wild on the subject of elementary tubular texture. . . . He hates Lippi and his researches with a perfect hatred. Lippi had been preferred to him by the Parisian Academy. Is he not working against Lippi, and it may be against truth, if they happen to go together, which I do not believe? . . . We have taken out our seats in the diligence to-morrow for Louvain, and on leaving Liège I must confess that I leave one of the most lovely places I have seen on the

Continent. 'Tis rich, populous, busy; the town in itself is old and good, though not so neat and cleanly as Mons; its environs wild and romantic. Besides, it seems full of good-natured *gash* old wives, and sonsy laughing-faced, good-looking, nay, some of them *very* good-looking, girls. What is more, I have not seen one positively ugly female face in Liège. . . .

"*Brussels, June* 17*th.*—In the afternoon we visited that most splendid institution, the *Hospice des Vieillards.* There are 500 poor in the establishment, and fifty who pay a board of £16 a year. . . .

"*June* 18*th.*—We left Brussels at five o'clock for Antwerp . . .

"*June* 19*th.*—After breakfast we walked down to the Cathedral. The morning being clear, we went up to the top of the immense spire, the third highest, it is said, in Europe, St. Peter's at Rome, and that of Strasburg, being still more lofty. The view from it of the branches of the Schelde on the one hand, and of the level and wooded plains of Belgium on the other, was very fine—superb. . . . After looking at Rubens's celebrated picture, the Descent from the Cross, in the Cathedral, we went to the splendid church of St. Jacques, and visited Rubens's tomb, also the famous picture of his family and himself, Vandyke's Christ, etc., and returned home to dinner at two, passing Rubens's house. . . . Arrived in Ghent about twelve. . . .

"*June* 21*st.*—Up to-day by seven, and at half-past eight at the house Aliénés, under Dr. Guislain's charge. . . . All the patients at M. Guislain's establishment *work,* at something or other. There are none idle, except those who are utterly furious. We saw spinning-wheels adapted for even the paralytic working at. M. Guislain mentioned that some patients had felt themselves so comfortable and happy in the institution, that they were with difficulty induced to leave it on their recovery. . . . Ostend itself is a town so very uninteresting that a traveller has no wish except to be driven through it. We had, however, to remain in it from two in

the afternoon till ten at night. About eight there came on a tremendous thunderstorm. The lightning was most beautifully forked, and the hail and rain perfectly inundated the streets. The wind had been blowing very hard for two days, and the thunderstorm (fortunately for us) allayed it for some time. I sat about an hour on deck, admiring the splendidly phosphorescent waves. The boat seemed as if it were wading through a sea of flame. . . .

"*London, June 27th.*—Called on Mr. Owen at the College of Surgeons. Mr. Owen showed me a collection of beautiful drawings belonging to Mr. Hunter, which Sir E. Home had never got his hands upon. They are executed by William Bell and the person who drew Mr. Hunter's plates of the G. U. Mr. Owen is publishing them. They contain many things in comparative anatomy which have been published in France and Germany of late years as new and great discoveries—for instance, the circulating and respiratory organs of the *holothuria*, for the discovery of which Tiedmann was crowned by the French Institute—the different epochs of the development of the heart and brain (dated 1782, and before Wolff?), the dissection of the eye of the cuttle-fish, and of the viscera of mollusca (prettier drawings than Cuvier's). What a gigantic labourer in the field of science Hunter must have been! He began his studies late in life, and did not live to an advanced age; but still he seems to have found time to turn his attention to every branch of natural and pathological science, and whichever branch he did meddle with, came forth renovated and improved from his magic touch. . . ."

Dr. Simpson afterwards visited Oxford, Birmingham, and Liverpool. At the latter place he makes a note of a visit that greatly influenced his future life:—"*Liverpool, Monday, July 6th.*—We breakfasted this morning with Dr. J. Vose, in Duke Street. After breakfast we waited upon Dr. Macrorie. . . . At seven I set off to drink tea and spend the evening with Mr. Grindlay and his family. . . . One of the Misses

Grindlay has a resemblance to Mary (his sister); much more like that of a sister than of a second or third cousin. . . .

"*Glasgow, 9th July* 1835.—Here I am again in that most sweet of all sweet countries, old Scotland. We left Liverpool at nine o'clock last night, arrived at Greenock at half-past five to-night. . . . Since leaving Liverpool I had only eaten one biscuit and a small bit of cheese at twelve o'clock to-day, and a halfpenny-worth of 'Gibraltar Rock' at Greenock. The reason why? I was awfully sick."

CHAPTER IV.

Elected President of the Royal Medical Society—Inaugural Address—Principal Baird—Negotiations with Dr. Mackintosh—Paper on Hermaphroditism—Practice—Rhymes—First Letter to Miss Grindlay—Hospital Work—Mesmerism—Appointed Assistant to Professor Thomson—Success as a Lecturer—Extra-Academical Lectureship—Address from Students—Disposition and Temper—Candidate for the Professorship—Marriage—Testimonials—Success—Letters.

It was said a long time ago, by a man who had meditated much on life and living, when describing the case of a prosperous but ignorant man—"Moreover, he hath not seen the sun, nor known anything." He might live many years, and yet get little knowledge. He might have all that his soul desired, and yet be denied the heart to enjoy it. There are more so called wide-awake men in the world than is generally supposed, who have not seen the sun! They neither look up nor around them. With eyes, they see not. Few men have been more unlike the members of this very wide-spread and numerous class than Dr. Simpson. He had early cultivated the habit of the eye. Few things escaped his notice. "He sees," said one, "not only everything that is, but a great many that are not." The remark was made with reference to his ready power of making facts and circumstances serve as a kind of alphabet, by whose association he found words that told to him a story few others heard. This quality was of the greatest value to him when travelling. Wherever he went nothing escaped his observation, and he had no rest till he pieced his facts together, and reached inferences

helpful to him and others in his every-day life. The extracts from the journal of his Continental tour show how actively at work these powers had been. When he returned home, he soon began to make good use of what he had seen and learned. In session 1835-36, Dr. Simpson was elected Senior President of the Royal Medical Society, the other Presidents for the year being Dr. Martin Barry,[1]—"one of the manliest of Quakers, and most endearing of men," afterwards highly distinguished as a microscopist in Anatomy and Physiology,—Dr. J. H. Pollexfen, and his own friend Dr. John Reid. Later, he was chosen an honorary member, a compliment seldom paid, and his name got a place on the list with those of Jenner, Vaugelin, Cuvier, Abernethy, Davy, Werner, Playfair, Berzelius, Astley Cooper, and others of European or world-wide fame. "To be one of the four annual Presidents of the Medical Society," says Dr. George Wilson, "is to reach a very high honour; and I question whether any dignity can compare in the eyes of a medical student with that which attaches to the office of Senior President. I have seen tears shed at the loss of a Presidentship, and the whole student world is in commotion before the annual election." On November 20, 1835, he delivered the President's Inaugural Dissertation. His subject was Diseases of the Placenta. It fell to him to preside at the annual dinner, and he reported progress to Bathgate :—

"My dear Sandy,—We have just got a note to-night from Principal Baird, accepting our invitation to the Medical Society dinner. We did not believe he would accept, and it is awkward, to say the least of it, as I have to toast him

[1] Note : Richard Owen, F.R.S., to Dr. Simpson.—"I desire to express my conviction that the most important anatomical and physiological discoveries that have been made in this country by the use of the microscope during the present century are those which have been communicated by Dr. Martin Barry to the Royal Society of London, which have been published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, and have received the additional mark of the estimation in which they have been held by that learned body, through the award to the author, Dr. Barry, of the Royal medal."

as Principal of the University, and must make a speech about the qualities of a minister and not a doctor—must, in fact, give a clerical sermon, and not a medical lecture. I am afraid I must read the 'Scotch Worthies,' to see what a minister *ought* to be, and of course must make Principal B. a very picture of a clerical man. But, in truth, he is much more like some jolly old Catholic Abbot, say of the Manuel[1] Monastery, than a sedate enthusiastic minister of the Scotch Church. . . . Many, many thanks to Janet for the welcome present promised myself.—Believe me ever most affectionately yours."

The writer of an able article in the *Scotsman* newspaper, May 10, 1870, graphically describes Dr. Simpson's appearance when presiding at a meeting of the Society. He says: "Circumstances led me to visit the Royal Medical Society, an institution in which, for more than a century, the *élite* of the medical students attending the University of Edinburgh have been accustomed to assemble for the purpose of reading essays and discussing medical and scientific subjects. The Presidentship of such a Society is naturally an object of laudable ambition for every advanced student or young practitioner, and many of the most illustrious names that have adorned Science or Medicine have recorded their elevation to that post as among their earlier honours. On the evening referred to the chair was occupied by a young man whose appearance was striking and peculiar. As we entered the room, his head was bent down, to enable him, in his elevated position, to converse with some one on the floor of the apartment, and little was seen but a mass of long, tangled hair, partially concealing what appeared to be a head of very large size. He raised his head, and his countenance at once impressed us. A poet has since described him as one of 'leonine aspect.' Not such do we remember him. A pale, large, rather flattish face, massive, brent brows, from under which shone eyes now piercing as it were to your inmost soul, now

[1] The name of Principal Baird's estate near Linlithgow.

melting into almost feminine tenderness, a coarseish nose, with dilated nostrils, a finely-chiselled mouth, which seemed the most expressive feature of the face, and capable of being made at will the exponent of every passion and emotion. Who could describe that smile? When even the sun has tried it he has failed, and yet who can recall those features and not realize it as it played round the delicate lines of the upper lip, where firmness was strangely blended with other and apparently opposing qualities? Then his peculiar, rounded, soft body and limbs, as if he had retained the infantile form in adolescence, presented a *tout ensemble* which, even had we never seen it again, would have remained indelibly impressed on our memory. 'You are in luck to-night,' said our conductor, 'Simpson is President.'"

The Medical Society Dissertation was published in the January, 1836, number of the *Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal.* Its preparation for the press cost him much labour:—"MY DEAR SANDY,—I promised Helen to write, but can't. It is five o'clock in the morning, and I am confoundedly tired. I have been up all night correcting the last printed sheet of my paper. I was up all night on Monday—never in bed, and have done with three or four hours' sleep for several others. Hogh-hei, good night. Ever most affectionately yours." His brother David wrote to Sandy: "The doctor has got his paper finished, and happy we all are at it, for I think it would soon have finished *him* with his late sitting and his early rising."

He had at the same time other work on hand that tasked all his energies. Several influential citizens were pleading for the discontinuance of the Craigentinny marshes near Edinburgh, where the sewage of the city was spread over grass lands, and Dr. Simpson was preparing evidence against their salubrity.

In the beginning of 1836 Dr. Simpson was elected a Corresponding Member of the Medical Society of Ghent—the first of a long list of foreign honours subsequently conferred on him. In the spring of the same year, he was on terms with the late Dr. Mackintosh, extra-academical lecturer on Obstetric Medicine,

with the view of lecturing conjointly with him, and ultimately taking upon him the whole duties of the class. Dr. John Reid took great interest in the negotiations with Mackintosh, and in his anxiety to see his friend in a position for which he believed him admirably fitted, he wrote to Dr. Simpson's brother, John, with reference to the money difficulty to the preliminary arrangements. John's answer well illustrates the devotion of the brothers to their "beloved James." Towards the close of Reid's life he found the answer among his papers, and forwarded it to Dr. Simpson:—"I send you the letter from your brother John which I mentioned to you. It will be a pleasing memorial of a brother's love, and your own anxieties and struggles on your starting fairly in the active business of life:"—

"BATHGATE, 30*th May* 1836.

"DEAR SIR,—I had your very kind letter last Thursday morning, but without a date, relative to James. Nobody has his interest more at heart than his sister, Sandy, and I, and you will confer a most particular obligation on us by doing for him what you can in regard to Dr. Mackintosh's arrangements. I must admit that after the meeting with Dr. Thomson at Moreland I was a little prejudiced in favour of his views, but am sure I told James in returning in the gig that he might use his own discretion, and that I should support him to the extent of all my abilities, and so will Sandy. Be as kind to him as possible, and cheer him on. Sandy and I can easily raise £200 or £300 in the meantime, and pay Mackintosh by instalments. Give him all the consolation you can, and use all your exertions for his interest, and such obligations shall never be forgotten by us.

"In the concluding part of your letter you ask me to excuse the liberty you took in writing, which I certainly most heartily do, and in the name of my sister, brother, and myself, tender you all our most warmest thanks for your attention and kindness. Do not, if possible, let James's prospects be blasted, for I would rather that my own heart were broken than that he should be disappointed. I am sure I have told him again and

again, both verbally and in writing, that he might consider mine as the joint-stock purse of the family so long as it can be divided. I have to apologize to you for not writing sooner, but I half expected to see James here on Saturday last.

"If my presence in Edinburgh is required on the occasion, and altho' the coaches are very throng just now I can easily mount

> 'My bold grey,
> For there 's life in his hoof-clank
> And hope in his neigh.'

"Excuse my not writing you holograph. I would rather ride ten miles than write as many lines. JOHN SIMPSON."

Sandy was kept aware of the progress of negotiations with Dr. Mackintosh :—

"2 TEVIOT ROW, *June 10th*, 1836.

"MY DEAR SANDY,—You wonder at my not having written you for eight or ten days, but the fact is, I had nothing definite to write. My arrangements with Mackintosh have not proceeded further than what I mentioned in my note to Mr. Dawson ; that is to say, he offers me the Midwifery department of his museum at a valuation fixed on by a friend of his and another of mine, and he lectures for me on any subjects I may choose or think difficult for two, or three, or four sessions, provided I begin next winter. . . . He further wishes me to lecture next winter conjointly with him on Medical Jurisprudence (a subject which Dr Fletcher taught) ; but I am afraid that two lectures a day would be too much for me, and it would distract my attention from Midwifery in too great a degree. I have made up my mind to lecture on Midwifery in Edinburgh ; but whether with Mackintosh or not, whether next winter or the next again, is still doubtful. My only objection to Mackintosh's arrangement is that it brings me so suddenly on the field. . . . I am by no means so well prepared as I could wish, but I believe teaching the subject to others is the best way to teach one's-self. It is a most extensive subject, and I sometimes become dispirited in thinking of it ; but if I do begin, I hope I will

master it. . . . Dr. Thomson is in a great fury with ——, who led the opposition against him. I see him frequently, and he speaks now of my arranging with Mackintosh as a matter of course. . . . Dr. Allen T. and I were breakfasting yesterday morning in Inverleith Row with Mr. Ellis (whom John saw at Moreland). Dr. Lombard, a celebrated physician of Geneva, was with us. . . .

"I have not got my lodgings definitely fixed. I shall go to Innes, provided I shall be allowed to live so far off from the hospital. I am not finally fixed, even in the hospital. Dr. Hamilton has only newly returned from Paris. I am to see Dr. H. to-night, and fix with him. The great objection to Innes's house is that it is up two flights of stairs. I am living in Teviot Row with a Miss Simpson. . . . I am scarcely off my feet from morning to night, running after this and that. I saw fourteen patients on Tuesday in every different quarter of the town; and accustomed as I have been to sitting for four years, my poor legs are like to rebel at the great use made of them. And then the sitting up all night; but my mind is made up for it all, and I am contented. I weary for Saturday eight days to have a talk over the matter with you all at Bathgate.—Yours ever, J. Y. Simpson."

In 1836 he wrote one important paper, and planned others that were afterwards published. Having engaged to write the article Hermaphroditism for Todd's *Cyclopædia of Anatomy and Physiology*, he was looking earnestly about him for illustrative facts among the lower animals. Years before, he had noted with much interest its occurrence among birds, and he now asked his Bathgate friends to help him to specimens.

"2 Teviot Row, *Friday morning.*

"My dear Sandy,—Many, many thanks to you and to Mr. Angus for your ready attention to my hen commission. The one you have got must be a very interesting one, and I have a great itching to have the dissection of it just now, but have

made up my mind to resist the temptation for the present, and will wait for some months till its plumage is in perfection, and the strange circumstances stated by Mr. David Angus regarding its habits be fully ascertained by some new experiments and observations. John, perhaps, will be so good as keep her, or him, at the Brewery, and there watch its habits for me till summer. I have half promised the skin to Professor Jamieson, to stuff for the Museum. Mr. Simpson, at the poultry-market here, has seen several hens resembling her, but nobody has followed up the subject as a matter of scientific observation, and therefore I wish much to do so, and to collect as many cases as possible. The other hen you mention you may send in at once if you get her, provided she is an old one that has changed into the male plumage. Such would be quite a case for my present paper. I am getting on satisfactorily with the essay whenever I can get half an hour to sit at it; but I am really so busy otherwise, that I begin to be afraid it will not be ready in time. . . . I have just now a constant journeying from one part to another of the town from breakfast-time till three or four o'clock, when I generally find myself in Duncan Street, where Helen is always kind enough to keep a slice of anything that has been at dinner for my tea. I have never dined in Teviot Row yet, except, some days when I have not got down, on a slice of bread and cheese. I have almost always several visits between tea and supper, and sleep, I can assure you, without rocking. The patients are mostly poor, it is true, but still they are patients. . . . I shall not be disheartened, but shall put a 'stout heart to a stey brae,' and always remember the motto, which Mary alludes to in her very kind letter, of 'patience and perseverance,' etc. If my health be spared me, I do hope that I may get into practice sufficient to keep me respectably after the lapse of some years; but I know years must pass before that. At present I enjoy the best possible spirits and health, and with all my toils, was never happier or healthier. On Wednesday morning I was wakened

by my bell at two, and the hospital nurse and Miss Russell's servant were both standing at the door for me. . . . I got one case over and Miss Russell visited before four, when I returned home, got a cup of tea, and was not disturbed from my desk till seven. Yesterday morning (Thursday) I was again roused at two to a bad case, was again back by four, and again wrote till breakfast-time. I drink tea on these occasions at no allowance. . . . I had just retired last night to bed when Mr. Cormack (whom John knows as the author of the work on Creosote) called, and a woman having become ill in the hospital, we went down there together. He slept with me, and has just left me a few minutes ago to indite this long epistle. . . . Dr. Reid and I were elected Fellows of the College of Physicians last week, without, I believe, a single black ball. The letter of credit arrived quite safe, and I went yesterday to pay from it the Government stamp for my diploma, which, it now seems, is £25 instead of £20. I know not how I shall ever be able fully to repay John and you for all your kindness in these money matters, and for all the still kinder expressions which always accompany them. The thoughts about them are the only ones which interfere with me at present in my happiness. I have, too, been getting a case of some old but still expensive works on Midwifery within these few days, which, for my own sake, I could not possibly miss, as they are very rare, and yet, for your sakes, I felt extreme reluctance and unhappiness in getting them placed to my account . . . And believe me ever most affectionately, J. Y. Simpson."

The hen referred to above was forwarded a few days after. "The hen," he wrote, "oh, it is really a glorious one, and will make a beautiful preparation. It is perfect profanation for Mary to speak of making cockieleekie with such a bird." But he had other than scientific wants to attend to. "I received my ale safe, and give the Johns my best thanks for it. Tell Mary my boots fitted excellently, only I could not approve of

the iron tackets. She says you were thinking of getting Geddes to make me a pair, which I cannot refuse, as they are so expensive here, and I wear so many of them. Tell John my paper was very favourably reviewed in a late number of one of the London medical journals, and that they are printing it *in toto* there."

Referring to his life at this time he said :—"In May 1836, in order to become more thoroughly acquainted with practical midwifery, I applied for the situation of house-surgeon to the Lying-in Hospital of this city, and, through the great kindness and liberality of Dr. Hamilton, I was immediately appointed to it, and continued to act in that Institution for upwards of twelve months." He had set his heart on this position, and when, for several months, obstacles seemed to intervene, he wrote in much depression to Bathgate :—"If I don't get it, what *shall* I do next?" After his appointment his general practice greatly increased. In the Hospital itself, his zeal, activity, and enterprise were speedily felt. His patients were now not the poor alone. Prospects were brightening, and he again began to sing. After an interval of several years, "the rhyming fit," as he called it, again visited him, and continued without interruptions, throughout June, the month of his vacation, which, he said, was given "to sentiment and somebody," and, in less force, till the end of 1837. Here are some of the fruits. They are not much worth, but they help us to understand the man.

A Stray Leaf with some Stray Rhymes, for a Preface to the Album of Songs, Sonnets, Songlets, etc. etc., of Miss Maria Bauchope of Kinneil. June 1837.

N.B.—The nightingale is not a native of Scotland, and the bird has seldom been seen on this side of the Border. Several years ago, however, one came and sung for some time in Kinneil wood, to the great delight of his Majesty's neighbouring lieges, and he left behind him a fair legatee.

Oh! once a lonely nightingale
  Stray'd afar to our northern strand,
Lured by a love of upland and dale,
  And the charms of our mountain land.

At last, in the olden wood of Kinneil,
He folded his wearied wing,
And bade its waken'd echoes swell
With notes so rich and ravishing,
That the startled Avon stopped to chide
The murmurings of his noisy tide,
And man, enchanted with the song,
Stood charm'd "for many a live-night long,'
List'ning to Nature's minstrel-king.

. . . . . .

'Twas neither far nor long he sought,
For soon the minstrel's glancing eye
The object of his fond wish caught,
As e'en Maria's self was nigh!
Then straight he poured into her soul
That racy flood of living song,
By which, with siren-like control,
The lady thralls her list'ning throng;
Those wild woodnotes of gloom and glee
By whose strange soothing witchery
O'er the still'd heart a charm is thrown,
Forcing the spirit of man to own
The spell of magic melody. [1]

But Miss Maria was not the "somebody" to whom the young doctor's thoughts chiefly turned. On his return from the Continent he had visited Liverpool, with the view not only of finding a ready port to Scotland, but mainly of making the acquaintance of his distant relatives Mr. Grindlay, shipowner, and his wife. He had already begun to think of one of the Misses Grindlay oftener and more tenderly than of any other of his lady friends. At the close of the session he wrote to Miss Grindlay a very long letter, from which the following extracts are made. The references to himself, his work, circumstances, and prospects are not after the fashion of young love. But they show his great anxiety to make the family well acquainted with himself and his manner of life.

"*May 6th*, 1836.

"My dear Miss Grindlay.—'Long looked and wished for

[1] Among those who visited Kinneil to hear the nightingale sing in the moonlight was a Bathgate weaver. After listening for a little, he surprised the silent crowd by saying, as he turned away with contempt, "It 's only a yellow yoit gane daft."

comes at last,'—so be it. I received your welcome epistle to-day, and was happy to see that you were keeping somewhat better. I hope you will have the good sense to get as well as ever again—and that immediately—in order to enjoy the present delightful weather. To keep unwell under such laughing suns and smiling skies as we have had for some days would, to say the least, be very stupid and ridiculous.

"So my lectures have closed, and I am again *free*, in EVERY sense of that little but comprehensive word. I was exceedingly glad when they were finished—as really at last I was almost finished with them. Since their termination, I have had both *white* and *blue* days—the latter but *rarely*. I have been busied at 'orra' moments with conducting the medical evidence for freeing poor Mr. J., the minister of K., at whose trial I have been three times across the water since you left. It is to be resumed upon the 4th of June, when six or eight doctors from Edinburgh will compear as witnesses in his favour. I think we are sure to gain.

"I expect my English boarder next week, or rather the end of this week. He is to give me £50 a year, and Tom Girdwood £40—that is, as long as I keep to my present humble lodgings. I was supping last night with my friend Dr. M., who has come to oppose me in my lecturing next winter. He has taken a self-contained house, at a rent of £65, and intends to keep it up with boarders. His mother is his housekeeper. I envy him in *nothing* but the power of furnishing such a place. Dr. S. has eight boarders, at £80 each per annum. I am getting quite learned in these concerns, and would have said more about them, had I not happened just now to lift my head, and take a thought and a sigh upon the matter. Then came the idea that you would probably be inclined to laugh at the unusual domesticwards strain my pen has been unwittingly running into—and so, and so, I bid the subject for the present—'Goodbye.'

"*Nicholas Nickleby!*—Why, *Nicholas Nickleby* is surely as

good and clever and racy as *Pickwick*. The account of the joint-stock meeting in the first number is inimitably good, and only too true; and the idea in the second, of the poor half-naked porter, who had 'slept in a stable and breakfasted at a pump,' is enough to keep up the character of Boz, were it nothing else.—(There is an episode!)

"I have just returned from bleeding Cinderella's mamma for a severe attack of cold. . . . You ask, Are we *immense* friends? I don't exactly know. That's plain and plump at least. Much more than we were perhaps—but not exactly immense. Mr. —— wrote me some time ago that her aunt told him accidentally that I was to be accepted (what a fearful word!) if I offered (what a still more fearful operation!), and her friends in the country have set it down as 'all settled.' It is all very flattering, and she is a sweet and lovely girl, but not exactly *the* person who, *I think*, would make me happy, or at least happi*est*; and since you left I have been presumptuous enough to *think* for myself in these little items. . . .

"I have been on the sick-list repeatedly since you left, with headaches, etc. etc. I hate the intermeddlements of these folks yclept doctors. They are really a great pest, and I a bad patient. . . . I had my head leeched on the Friday, and on coming home from my evening visits on the Sunday at ten o'clock, found a message ordering me off to Kirkcaldy by six next morning. I slept two hours, and wrote out the evidence during the remaining six—sat in Court from twelve o'clock on Monday till three o'clock on Tuesday morning—was at it again after breakfast—returned to Edinburgh about six on Tuesday evening—went to bed for an hour, with a swollen face—rose at eight, and danced at a party of Mrs. Walker's till my face was considerably better—that is, till three on Wednesday morning, and when I came home I sat down to my lecture!! I have tried two or three times to get up early since the lectures finished, but have been regularly knocked up, or rather down again, with a megrim

headache. But, after all, perhaps it is only laziness.—Yours always, J. Y. S."

Yet he found time to write verses for ladies' albums. Among these are six stanzas on "My Fatherland." One may serve as a specimen :—

Oh bear me to my Fatherland,
Nor say the wish is wild and vain ;
My foot must touch its native strand
Ere this sick heart be roused again.
Strangers ! 'tis true your southern sky
Has tints more bright, a breath more bland,
But vain these charms to me—for why ?
'Tis not the blue sky of my Fatherland.

. . . . . .

Then there are three stanzas on a "Pansy, plucked from a very rich bed of them under a young lady's special care and cultivation :"

Would the Greek sage's creed were true ![1]
That when had passed life's struggling hour
The soul, at last unprisoned, flew,
Each to its own self-chosen flower
And (fated now no more to roam)
There found a bright Elysian home.

. . . . . .

But the month that was to have been given to song and the enjoyment of nature's sunshine, had its shadows. Like many thinkers, he had his periods of deep depression. Even then he was becoming acquainted with that seriousness, if not sadness, which comes to most men of studious habits, with growing frequency as years glide past. Miss Grindlay was on a visit to some relatives at Cameron Bridge, Fife, when he forwarded the following letter, in the erroneous belief that June 27th, not 7th, was his birthday :—

"9 Deanhaugh Street, 28*th June* 1837.

"My dear Miss Grindlay,—Yesterday was my twenty-sixth birth-day; and what a fearful waste of time is summed up in that little numeral ! When we deduct the periods spent in sleeping,

[1] "Pythagoras, in the spirit of true poetry rather than of philosophy, conceived that the soul of man after death took up its abode in flowers, etc."

in eating, in amusement, in ennui, in idleness, and in doing everything but what ought to have been done, it is awful to think how small a fraction of time out of these twenty-six years has been employed as it ought to have been. I am always, I think, sad on my birth-day, and yesterday sadder than ever. If I were superstitious (and who is free from some little taint of it at times?) I would almost regard yesterday as darkly ominous to me. All day long I was in the *blues*, and could not manage to get my mind to look to the sunny side of this world and its struggles. It was one of those days—those fitful days of gloom —in which the past appeared to me as almost lost,—the future as a labyrinth of vexations and disappointments, and poverty and dependence. I got three wounds to my spirits during the day. First, I was told of a lady whom I was fully reckoning upon for a patient, having called in another practitioner because I was *not* married. Second, I had a pleasant promise broken to me. And thirdly, and principally, I felt dreadfully distressed and out of humour with myself in having, however inadvertently on my part, led you to suppose that your previous letter had 'offended me' in some way. . . . Now you threaten to pry no more into my affairs nor to write me again whatever is at the time uppermost in your thoughts. But you must recall both resolutions, in accordance with your former offer to write me in *friendship*, for that friendship must surely be only fit for the frigid zone, which is not warmed by all that feeling which puts ever to flight such calm and calculating resolutions as these two; and I do most sincerely trust that ours is not destined to degenerate so soon. You have full and unlimited powers to make all inquiries at my *pen* about Cinderella or anybody else, to quiz me or tease me in any way your ingenuity may devise. I shall, I am sure, never feel *offended* at *you*, and if you *stop* making all your usual inquiries I will be extremely apt to come to the conclusion that *I* have been your offender. Do write me again on Monday (you can't guess how I weary for these Monday evenings), and make me certain that you are my *friend* again. I have few, very few indeed. . . .

"I have seen a very flattering book to-night, a work that has long been expected from Dr. Montgomery of Dublin, one of the most rising professors and practitioners there. He has noticed a little essay which I sent some time ago to the *Dublin Medical Journal* in a manner highly pleasing to me, and far, far beyond its merits. There are six lines of pure egotism for you! . . .

"I was going to send you Dr. Sharon Turner's History of the Flood, but could not get hold of it at the library. It is a most interesting geological work. What did you think of Lyell? Would you like the first volume again, or any of the subsequent ones? I have sent Whewell's Bridgewater Treatise, which has always been my favourite, among these works. You will find, I think, one or two chapters near the beginning, and most of those in the second part of the book, on the 'Stability and Vastness of the Universe,' etc., very beautiful and interesting. You may keep it for two or three weeks. I have got the loan for nine or ten days of the work on 'Enthusiasm,' which you will be so good as to return me on Monday eight days. You will find *some* chapters interesting, if you have not time to read the whole. What do you think of my friend Dr. Hibbert's book on Apparitions? It is a very curious one. . . . Now, fully expecting to hear from you on Monday, I remain, my dear coz, your very sincere friend, JAMES Y. SIMPSON."

Dr. Simpson, in company of his friend Dr. Reid, again visited Liverpool in the autumn of 1837. During this visit he inserted a long poem in Miss Grindlay's Album, on *The Last of the Shipwrecked Crew*—

. . . . . .

O'er the dark seas his eyes are now
With straining gaze and wildness cast,
And on his broad and manly brow
Thoughts are gathering thick and fast:
These thoughts—they reck not of the death
That glares around, above, beneath,
But far o'er oceans wide they roam,
Where those he loves the most on earth
Are nestled 'round one happy hearth.

. . . . . .

On his return he wrote to the Misses Grindlay :—

"2 Deanhaugh Street, *Tuesday, Sept.* 1837.

"My dear Cousins,—Here are *we* (I and *the* hat) safely fixed at last in No. 2 Deanhaugh Street. I am happy to add that Dr. Reid, Mr. Scott, and I were never in any degree sea-sick during the passage. Indeed, I never had a more pleasant sail. After we left Liverpool I sat musing upon deck till sunset—and a beautiful and gorgeous sunset it was. By that time our vessel was dashing on most gallantly before a fresh but favourable breeze. . . . After tea Dr. Reid and I played at drafts (is that word correctly spelled?) till about ten. We then came on deck to enjoy the night-scene—and such a night as it was! I will not soon forget it. Our vessel was by that time joyfully and merrily dancing along the coast of Man—with 'the wide and open sea' for a ballroom,—and that old patent, silver-beamed lamp of Dame Nature's—the moon—for a bright and laughing chandelier to it—and an orchestra; but here my simile must really stop, unless you can with me for a moment be disciples of the Old Greek astronomers, and believe with them in the music of the spheres and stars, every one of which doth (as it is writ, at least, somewhere or other in the beautiful moonlight scene of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*)—

'in his motions like some angel sing,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim.' . . .

"I stopped in Glasgow till four o'clock, when Dr. Reid and I set off for Bathgate. My friends there were all astonished at my staying so long, more particularly since my principal professional opponent in Stockbridge had run away in my absence, and some of his patients were promising to put themselves under my charge. Of this, however, I could have no knowledge in Liverpool. I have been most abundantly *teased* since I came back, but bear it all with the philosophy of a Stoic. Everybody about Bathgate, and many in Edinburgh here (for it seems I have by my absence made more noise in the

world than I ever could do by my presence), knows a great deal more about her than I myself do. I was told since my return the number of silk gowns she had when in Edinburgh by one person, the number of bonnets by another, the shape of her mouth by a third, the colour of her face by a fourth, the exact amount of her fortune by a fifth, etc. The gentleman who is to bring me letters from her does not come home till Friday, instead of a week ago, which is abundantly teasing. . . . —I remain, yours very sincerely, J. Y. Simpson."

He had great pleasure in hospital work, and did it thoroughly. Recently he had often asked, "Cannot something be done to render the patient unconscious while under acute pain, without interfering with the free and healthy play of natural functions?" At the earnest solicitation of an English friend, he had turned his attention to *Mesmerism*, which at the time was much talked of in the metropolis. With eager promptness he at once began to try to set it in useful relations. Might not the fulfilment of his anæsthesia dreams lie in this direction?

"My dear Sandy,—I was a great sceptic four weeks ago, and laughed at it all, but have since seen enough to stagger me. Tell John that mad dogs are *nothing* to it. Yesterday I magnetized, for instance, a young woman, by waving my hand only in a looking-glass *behind her back*, in which her shadow was reflected, and she was so sound asleep in three minutes that you could not wake her by pinching, rugging, etc. etc., as severely at her as you pleased. It would just have taken place, I believe, as well if the looking-glass had not been there; but I tried the experiment with it to please some one present. . . . Dr. Abercrombie, Alison, etc. etc., were present. Tell Dr. Dawson that he should come in and see the effects. I don't know what to believe about it; but certainly the phenomena are very wonderful, and I could not have believed them except I had seen them myself. . . . I have had all the principal medical men here seeing it done

at my hospital. I have sent you an account of some experiments upon it at London, which you will find very diverting. —Ever most affectionately yours, J. Y. Simpson."

I have heard him illustrate the "gullibility" of the mesmeric patient, by referring to the case of a nervous lady who used to come to him daily to be set asleep. On one occasion he said:—"I leave town to-morrow for London, but if you think of me at the appointed time I shall bring on the sleep in the usual way." He forgot his promise, but she went to sleep at the minute named!

In the autumn of 1837 he wrote to his brother:—

"*Saturday morning.*

"My dear Sandy,—I write you by James Wallace to tell you how matters are getting on with Dr. Thomson, as I dare say you have heard or seen in the newspapers of his having *resigned* his Professorship, and are anxious to know the result. At the same time that I was writing Mary last Tuesday morning of his intention of retiring from public life, he made up his mind to give in his resignation, and it was accordingly sent off to the Lord Provost, and laid by him before the Council that day. The Council referred it to the College Committee. . . . If an assistant is merely recommended, Dr. T. says that he shall recommend me to the Council, and not allow William to take it, as it would, in fact, be setting aside his hopes of ever being elected Professor, or, at least, it would plainly imply their wish not to make him one. But this is as yet quite a private affair between Dr. T. and me, and is not to be mentioned out of doors. In all probability I shall be left to my own exertions, and all your kindnesses again. I shall write any further particulars by the earliest opportunity.—I am, yours ever most affectionately, in great haste,

"J. Y. Simpson."

An assistant was to be appointed, and Professor Thomson strongly recommended Dr. Simpson. In his letter to the

Town Council, Dr. Thomson refers to him "as fully qualified to conduct the business of the Pathology class," and adds, his "papers have been received with approbation by the profession at large."

"*Friday, half-past eleven* A.M.

"MY DEAR SANDY,—I write in great haste. I have been up writing since two o'clock this morning at a paper which is going off to London, and it is time to be running to my patients. . . . Did you read the scurrilous attack on Dr. Thomson in the reports of the Town Council? . . . Dr. William came down yesterday. He is not to be allowed to lecture this winter by the Council, and I am to be named to them on Tuesday first, or second, as *interim* lecturer on Pathology for the ensuing winter. They are to object to whomsoever Dr. Thomson proposes, so that I shall be abundantly blackguarded, no doubt, and perhaps not allowed. It may be given to some Professors to divide the duty amongst them. My age is the great drawback. I wish I had John's white head. . . . Tell Mary that Miss Grindlay goes to Boness next week. If she has a spare bed, I should like greatly to offer her a night's entertainment in Bathgate. She is very anxious to know Mary, and is really an excellent creature. . . . J. Y. S."

"*Tuesday forenoon*, 31*st October* 1837.

"MY DEAR SANDY,—I write you with my mind whirling in a vortex of doubts and difficulties. To-day the Pathology question comes on in the Council, and I care not though I be out-voted. I only wish that they will *decide* it one way or another. Dr. Mackintosh died on Saturday of fever. . . .

"I have been up writing a paper for the *Edinburgh Medical Journal* since three this morning. . . . Tell Mary that Miss Grindlay is at Boness. She went yesterday; but I persuaded her past her Bathgate trip this time.—With kindest respects to Janet and my nephews, I remain, yours ever affectionately, J. Y. S."

"80 George Street, *Tuesday evening, seven o'clock.*

"My dear Sandy,—I have been elected interim-lecturer on Pathology to-day, the Dean of Faculty having told the Council that they could not interfere with Dr. Thomson's appointment. The College Bailie has orders to instal me. There was much squabbling about the matter.—In great haste, yours ever most affectionately, J. Y. Simpson."

"My dear Sandy,—I get on most famously now with the lectures. I talk them all from a small leaf of short notes, and manage to gab out an hour, often so as to astonish myself at my own fluency and impudence. Dr. T. is going to lecture on the Wednesdays, which I think rather bad of him; but I cannot help it. He is to give me £100 for the six months' work. I rise regularly at three in the morning, in order to get all ready by breakfast. I shall give you all particulars when out at Christmas. . . .

"Excuse great haste, and with kindest love to all, believe me, ever most affectionately yours, James Y. Simpson.

"*P.S.*—Many thanks for the shortbread.

"Friday forenoon—running off to the class."

At the close of the session an address, signed by fifty-three students, was presented to him, in which they express their "high sense of the zeal, fidelity, and success with which he discharged the duties of the professorial chair, their admiration of his high talents, of the varied and extensive research which he has displayed, and of his uniform and kind affability, which, while it exalted him in the eyes of all as a teacher, endeared him to each as a friend."

Still in error as to his birthday, he writes to Miss Grindlay in the summer of 1838:—

"27*th June, nine o'clock* P.M.

"My dear Miss Grindlay,—This is the 27th of June, and my twenty-seventh birthday, and the day on which I promised to charge you a postage. Well, it is unfortunate that it is so,

as I do not happen to be in a very quill-driving mood. I am not *blue*—no, not at all—but I have had a long day's work, and would not ask my eyelids to-night to keep longer apart for any person except your own cousinly self. Yes, 'tis certainly again the 27th of June, and many things have happened in my 'eccentric career' since the same day last year. It has been a year of wild downfallings and uprisings,—of changing lights and shadows. There was never a year, or at least (to speak of the winter alone) a *session,* in which I did so much, and, at the same time, so little. Indeed, last winter was a strange blending of working and romping,—of study and idleness,—of pleasure and pathology,—of lecturing and laughing,—of investigating the phenomena of diseases and dinner parties,—of agues and quadrilles,—of insanity and coquetry. I had everything in excess except sleep, and the paucity of it made room for the superfluity of everything else,—good, bad, and indifferent. If my head were clear enough to-night to cast up the gains and losses, I dare say, or at least I hope, that it would be in favour of the former. . . .

"It was decidedly, as I can see now, rather an unfortunate step that I took when I accepted of the interim-lectureship of Pathology last winter. I ought to have been lecturing for myself, and by omitting to do so have allowed others to get started before me in that field. But I shall try and make up to them next winter. The race of life is a long one in some respects, so long that I hope the advantage they have gained will only stimulate me more to exert myself, with the hope of gaining upon them ere the end of it. . . . This summer I have been as yet comparatively idle, except in so far as my practice is concerned, and that has increased considerably. But I have been studying or writing too little. I had scarcely a good enough stock of health, to be sure, to allow me to do much; but I might and should have done more. I intend to begin directly to prepare my winter lectures. I was up to-day at three o'clock, finishing an essay for the next or October

number of the *Edinburgh Medical Journal.* I don't rise so early above once or twice a week, though I should do so. The subject is a new one; and don't think me egotistical if I say I *hope* to get some credit by it. If I said otherwise I would be acting the hypocrite. I was informed this week that an Italian translation in full of one of my essays had been published in the Medical Journal of Milan. That is something like an honour. It was also reprinted in a London journal. How really egotistical I am to-night! That feeling will be destroyed by Saturday, for then the London quarterly journals come down, and one of them will be sure to contain a *slicy* review of my paper on Cholera. So be it. I shall bear it like a Stoic—won't I? . . . Cinderella is quite recovered again. . . . She is, I confess, a lovely young lady; but somehow or other I have come to think this summer that there is a great difference between a lovely sweetheart and a lovely wife,—between the beauty and ornament of the drawing and ball room and that of one's domestic fireside,—between a companion in a dance and a companion in life. I have no doubt that Cinderella will make a *good* and beautiful wife to any one who is able to maintain her; but I have my strong doubts if she could make any one very happy where there were many domestic cares and concerns to annoy. . . . Now for sleep, but before doing so, let me, in conclusion, beseech you to write me *soon, soon* (I shall always willingly pay a post). My kindest regards to the young ladies, and in the meantime believe me your ever affectionate cousin,

"JAMES Y. SIMPSON."

In the session of 1838-39, Dr. Simpson delivered his first course of lectures on Obstetric Medicine, in the Edinburgh Extra-Academical School. His gifts as a scientific teacher, and his influence over his students, are referred to in documents presented to him by his class at the close of the session. The highest approbation is expressed of "the unwearied diligence

and assiduity with which he discharged the important duties of a teacher." "The ready and fluent manner in which the lectures were delivered; the extensive and intimate acquaintance with his subject, and with collateral branches of medicine, which he displayed; and his mildness and suavity of manner" are specially referred to. Dr. W. Coke, who had been chosen to present the address, added, "Your lectures have, on all occasions, discovered such a depth of research, such an extent of reading, both of foreign authors and of those of our own country, such an intimate acquaintance with every branch of your subject, as often excited our surprise, and called forth our applause."

His first session as a lecturer was a success. But this was the reward of work, not the triumph of genius. Never, indeed, had he worked so hard as during that session. He gave much time and care to the preparation of his lectures, wrote several valuable papers in the literature of his profession, kept himself fully abreast of general medical science, and gave himself with devotion to his now rapidly increasing practice. After tracing his life at this time, in comparing what he wrote and did with his conscientious methods of writing and doing, I have felt that there are few instances, if any, on record, of so much work well done in so brief a period. His hopes were high; his love of science deep; he had a class in complete sympathy with himself—a never-failing spur; he believed that work could win success; and his practice promised to yield a competency and allow him to follow his scientific studies. All this kept him in good heart throughout the Session. As it drew to a close, and hours of idleness seemed for a season fairly within reach, he fell back on his old habit of versifying; he laughed and "lisped in numbers."[1] In him, too, the child ever continued companion of the man. He carried the fresh feelings of childhood into the matured powers of manhood. Thus through life his readiness to enter with children into childhood's

[1] Mrs. Thin, Ormiston Lodge, North Brixton, at whose father's house

ways—to romp with a girl, have a game with a boy, or to sport with a kitten or a dog. After the close of the session, his letters to his friends in Bathgate and Liverpool were more than usually happy and playful.

"2 Deanhaugh Street, *April* 12, 1839.

"My dear Miss Grindlay,—Have you got 7½d. to spare to the postman? I have got half-an-hour to spare till my coffee is ready, and intend *patriotically* to devote it to the good of my country's exchequer, by fining you the said sum for your wilful negligence and dead perverse silence. In lieu of your 7½d. I give you three facts (price 2½d. each), dear—very!

1. I have at last taken *the* house round the corner, . . .	£0	0	2½
2. I have hired a *housekeeper* from Dublin,	0	0	2½
3. Miss —— *is* married at last to a sailor,	0	0	2½
	£0	0	7½

Dr. S. was, at this period, a frequent guest, has sent me a copy of verses entitled—

Sleepy Snatches from my Rhyming Dream, and Ruminations regarding my excellent Chicken, 19th March 1839 (accompanied by the worthy creature's breastbone).

My noble, lordly, high-bred chicken,
Well wert thou worth a gourmand's picking;
Thy savoury flesh, so sweetly pure,
Would have charmed the veriest epicure.
. . . . . .
Thou sacred bone that guard'st the breast,
I summon thee from midst the rest!
Let not one instant now be lost,
But speed thee through the Penny Post.
. . . . . .

On another occasion his card was handed in, bearing the following lines:—

"Dr. S., with great regret,
Finds himself so much beset
With sickly, dead, and dying,
As almost sets his eyes a-crying;
Hence ye of No. 23,
Pray don't wait for him to tea."

"On one occasion," adds Mrs. Thin, "he took my sisters to see the 'capping' in the College, and when the Professors entered, pointing to Professor Hamilton, he said, 'Do you see that old gentleman?—well, that's my gown.'"

What do you think of your bargain?—Yours very faithfully, J. Y. Simpson.

"*P.S.*—I don't know whether to add a postscript or not. I *scarcely* think you deserve one; at least, I know *this*, that to *none* other among womankind would I write one after having now three or four unanswered. So pray consider yourself highly honoured and flattered by it. . . .

"The *facts* in the preceding page perhaps require no comment. Miss —— has married a Yorkshire sailor. I pity him most sincerely. Amen. Not at all sorry, not in the most minute degree. . . .

"The house is perhaps bold. I was frightened after I did it; but I feel I did right. My practice has greatly increased in this neighbourhood, so I could not dream of quitting it. I have drawn about £90 since 1st January, and probably may make out £300 this year. My landlady is very kind to me, but not civil to my patients, and forgetful of messages, so that I would have been obliged to quit. All my friends advised me to take *the* house in question. At last I referred the matter to Dr. Robertson, who *used* to lecture me *against* housekeeping. Considering the state of my practice, etc. etc., he strongly advised me to take it, and so it was closed at once. The rent is £28, front door, self-contained, oil-painted and papered, etc. etc.—in all, a most eligible situation, and a comfortable *home*. What a sweet little word that is, one that I have known for years now in name, not in essence. . . .

"I shall be in the furnishing horrors after this week is over—a sad job. My brother, the baker at Bathgate, gives me the money required in loan, and I pay him back as I can. . . .

"I have been lecturing twice a day for some time past, and have very nearly broken my health once or twice, but I shall have fourteen days' vacation from that directly. I have lately become acquainted with Robert Chambers, the editor of *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, a delightful personage. I have

two notes lying before me from a young lady of great talent who is writing some articles for his Journal. It is an odd sort of case. She is intimate with Lord Jeffrey and Professor Pillans, two great critics, who have praised her productions in MS., and advised her to become authoress. None of her own family know of them, and she has twice sent for me of late (within the last three days) to listen to and have *my* advice upon them. It seems I have one quality as a critic, that I don't *flatter* her so much as the others, and she is quite a character to despise it. Now pray do write a word or two, or really I shall take it as a sufficient hint that my silence would be preferred. J. Y. S.

"Your newspapers are good, but *nothing* to a letter."

At Whitsuntide term, 1839, he took possession of the house 1 Dean Terrace, where a note from Mary soon reached him; "How do you like your *ain house?* Every visitor from Edinburgh brings us word of your prosperity, or rather of your industry and its reward. No one, I am sure, rejoices more to hear it than I do." Since April he had been engrossed with "plenishing, patients, and papers;" but, busy as he was, he took great interest in the homeliest cares and wants of his friends. Sandy was informed that—"Tom's bakehouse took fire on Saturday, and in a few minutes £60 worth of biscuit was wasted," and asked to report that he had forgotten "Dr. Dawson's trousers' piece, but he would send it on Saturday, with a copy of his paper, which had been translated into French, and praised by various English journals in very flattering terms." Mary was told that he would "look to the gas things, and make all arrangements about her gas lustre." In nearly every letter, messages were sent to old school-fellows in very humble walks of life, touching matters which he knew would interest them, but which could not be of the least moment to himself. "He could be considerate in a sick-room, genial at a feast, joyous at a festival, capable of discourse with

many minds, large-souled, not to be shrivelled up into any one form, fashion, or temperament."

But other features of heart and mind were beginning to appear. Hitherto he seems to have fitted easily enough into the College circle of friends and fellow-workers, and had not shown much of that strong individuality—or, as we might say, polarity—of character, for which he was afterwards distinguished. It rarely happens that men who shoot ahead of companions, and climb rapidly to higher steps in life's ladder than they, carry with them the cordial sympathy and continue to be cheered by the love of all their old friends. The once happy band is generally broken up into rival parties, and, too often, alienation and all the bitterness of party strife takes the place of confiding intercourse and mutual forbearance. When occasion and circumstances bring latent powers into action, and give their possessor an advanced place in the race of life, many of the friends left behind refuse to recognise any higher qualities than those with which they were formerly acquainted. Success is attributed to happy accident, or to personal forwardness, and not to the force of natural endowments, strengthened by painful training and disciplined by persistently earnest work. And as step after step in the ladder is reached, these unsympathizing acquaintances console themselves through life by reiterating, "Well, he is not so clever after all; I beat him at school and at college." The critics stand still, but the world moves on, because its leaders move.

When Dr. Simpson began professional life, he had the strongest conviction that with health and opportunity he could climb to a leading place in it. Even from boyhood he had been taught, that the only road to this was by hard work, and that position is taken, not given. From the outset he was resolved to win. His methods of work showed the strength of will, and all "the battle in him." It is clear that, at least at this period, he was ignorant of the fact, that some ends are most easily reached by roundabout ways. He saw the

point clearly which he wished to gain, and struck away to it by the shortest cut. He was plain of speech too, and called "a spade a spade," not "an implement used by the horticulturist to prepare the soil for the reception of the seed." He might have, by soft circumlocution, saved himself much trouble, and his friends a good deal of uneasiness. But he did not at that time, or ever, learn the lesson. And he could be angry; for with all the deep tenderness of heart, his maiden-like softness of disposition, and his winning gentleness, which drew to him the love of children, the confidence of strangers, and, what was not less suggestive, the affection of dogs, on occasions a rugged sternness outcropped which surprised men. But in his anger there were none of those fruits so often met with in the world, of pitiful spite, backbiting, or the meanness that rejoices to trip an opponent in the dark. His anger was liker that graphically described by old Thomas Fuller: "Anger is one of the sinews of the soul; he that wants it hath a maimed mind, and, like Jacob, sinew-shrunk in the hollow of his thigh, must needs halt; nor is it good to converse with a man that cannot be angry."[1] True; for both as to speech and behaviour society has claims on all which cannot be disregarded without penalty. In order that thinkers and workers may fit easily into the place destined for them in their profession, corners of disposition and rough points of individuality require to be rubbed off. And fellow-workers in the same field are thereby saved some annoyance and much vexation. Nevertheless, there is virtue in feeling strongly and in speaking plainly, even when our own honest interests only are at stake, because all sincere men associate their interests with those of truth. But trials that come by plain speaking when the interests of truth demand it, are more easily borne than those which spring from mean professional jealousies. These have a power to chafe, annoy, and irritate, which great trials have not. The weight of a

[1] *The Holy State.*

great sorrow is ever profitable, but the fruit of paltry annoyances is continual unrest. Great minds cannot despise them, any more than the mastiff can the flies which on a warm day in summer disturb his repose. If the effort to get rid of them sometimes seems exaggerated, the explanation will be found in the fact, that strong natures are not always on their guard. Thus hasty expressions, random irony, unpremeditated hard speeches, the look of impatience and irritation, have often broken up acquaintanceships, and separated friend from friend. Dr. Simpson had early experience of these things. His habits of open speech and ready action in professional matters were fitted to lead to them. That he was ashamed and vexed when little sparks kindled great fires, and that he sought to be on his guard against the approach of everything tending to alienate any one member of the Faculty from him, there can be no doubt. I find among his papers a correspondence, in the autumn of 1839, which illustrates these remarks. The letters are carefully put up, and marked by himself "*to be preserved*," as a warning against giving to trifles a weight they deserve not, and as a witness to himself that he had failed in this respect. But for the care he took in preserving this record, the circumstance would not have been referred to here. It was no more part of his true life at the time, than the spark from the hoof is part of the high-mettled steed.

On the forenoon of September 13, 1839, a few medical friends, among whom were Dr. Simpson and Dr. Lewins of Leith, were conversing together in the reading-room of the College of Physicians. Soon the conversation turned to an anonymous letter that had lately appeared in the newspapers, on Queen's College, Ireland. "What a precious piece of humbug!" said Lewins, with reference to a remark of Simpson on another matter. Turning to Lewins, and looking him full in the face, he said, "That was a scandalous and lying article in the *Observer*. I hope you were not the author of it?" Dr.

Lewins was the author, though Dr. Simpson was not aware of it at the time. But it was wrong to convey the impression, that he believed it possible for any man, with whom he continued on terms of intimacy, to write what is scandalous and lying. And that Dr. Simpson felt this is clear from the preservation of the packet. Serious results were threatened; the preliminaries for a duel were being arranged; but by the friendly intervention of Dr. P. D. Handyside, Dr. John Reid, and Dr. Argyle Robertson, matters were amicably arranged, and the doctors "were friends ever after." "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire." Yet ninety-six per cent. of the professional heats and bickerings that break up friendships, may be traced to rash and unintentionally uncharitable words. So far as the merits of this case are concerned, the doctors were equally to be blamed. Their friends showed them this, and mutual expressions of regret were freely offered and frankly received. "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able to bridle the whole body."

In the end of September, Dr. Simpson accepted an invitation, from his friend Dr. Montgomery of Queen's College, Dublin, to visit Ireland. He returned by Liverpool, and called on the Grindlays. "I had," he wrote to Sandy, "a most delightful trip. I was fed and feasted most luxuriously by the Dublin doctors, and received all sorts of kindness and good promises from them. Mr. Grindlay's people were all very kind."

Professor Hamilton resigned the Midwifery Chair in 1839, and Dr. Simpson announced himself a candidate. His letter of application to the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council, with whom the election lay, is dated, "1 Dean Terrace, November 15, 1839." He had this in view when he visited Liverpool, and, by becoming engaged to Miss Jessie Grindlay, he took a step which removed what had been held to be one disqualification for the Chair—his being unmarried.

"My dear Sandy,—I have all but given up hopes of getting the Midwifery Chair this time. Dr. Lee or Dr. Kennedy of Dublin will probably gain it. I have been told by a number of the Council that they have *no* objection to me but my youth and my celibacy, and that if any person *in Scotland* gets it, I will, notwithstanding these defects. You know I am superstitious, as much so as yourself, and I dream always that I will yet be Professor in despite of them, though not just now. I am in no way dispirited by these views. It will *make* me a practitioner, though not a Professor. . . .

"Excuse great haste, and with kindest love to all, believe me your ever affectionate brother, J. Y. Simpson."

But notwithstanding this fit of despondency, Dr. Simpson set himself to bring every available influence to bear on his election. The fruits of his "pluck" and his "push" very soon began to appear. His friends were encouraged, and his opponents astonished. That one so young, with so few men of acknowledged influence to back him, and with the whole College party opposed to him, should become a candidate in earnest, seemed to many of the academical men, and to many outsiders also, a rash act of presumption. And they tried right earnestly to defeat him.

From the outset it was clear the contest would be keen and bitter, and the decisive vote very close. No one was more early aware of this than Dr. Simpson. Thus his many-sided efforts. He called the attention of eminent men at home and abroad to the papers written by him; he asked the help of lay friends; he sought the testimony to his efficiency from young scientific workers, of whose future eminence he cherished the highest hopes; and he waited personally on the patrons. "A host of candidates," he wrote to Mr. Grindlay, "have already appeared in the field. Most of them come forward on the ground of their local or political influence, and my present object is to break down all their external fortifications, and to

leave the decision to be made on the ground of merit, and of merit alone. They have all either family or fortune influence. I have neither. . . . Willie Carmichael[1] and I had a pleasant drive to Dalmeny. I was under medical orders; for having written and canvassed nearly seventy consecutive hours, I at last felt so ill that I had to apply to my medical friends." Even the family taint of superstition gave him encouragement and help. His brother Sandy had lately read of some one, who was "married and a Professor when only twenty-eight," and had mentioned the fact to Mary, who had the gift of "reading the cup." This practice, not yet banished from rural and mining districts, was resorted to in the belief, that future fortunes could be read from the arrangement of the tea-dregs, on the cup being shaken. Mary forgot Sandy's information, and, transferring his facts to the region of her own fancy, she made the cup record concerning James what the memoir had truly recorded of another. James was told of the cup's revelation, but not of the book. When Dr. Simpson was expressing his wonder at the fulfilment a few months later, Sandy related the whole story, to his great amusement.

The canvass was interrupted for a short time by an event of more moment to him than the Professorship. On the 26th of December 1839 Dr. Simpson was married to Miss Jessie Grindlay. But there was no honeymoon. That was to come later. The canvass required his immediate presence in Edinburgh, and there his whole time was given to it. When he applied to Mr. Grindlay for his daughter's hand in marriage, he informed him with great frankness of the whole state of his affairs, which at the time was far from satisfactory. "May I," he wrote, "beg your attention to another subject. Last Friday I wrote to solicit what I had long set my heart on—your daughter Jessie's hand in marriage. . . . At the present moment, though my friends tell me my chance for the Professorship is excellent, yet I believe myself I shall not get it

[1] Dr. W. S. Carmichael.

just now, as possibly Dr. Lee or Dr. Kennedy will, as strangers, be preferred over me. In asking then your daughter's hand, I ask it, not with any *certainty* of being elected, and thus having a future at once at my feet—I ask it for better or for worse, whether I succeed, or, what is more probable, do not succeed. But, taking it at the worst, I do think I shall be enabled by my practice alone to maintain a wife respectably. At the same time I am sure you will pardon me if I tell you—indeed, it is my bounden duty to tell you—that, as I stand just now, I am in debt." The debt with which he charged himself was one sum of £200, which "Sandy, one of the best of men that breathes," had spent on his education, and another sum to which he thus refers :—"Again, he gave me last spring a bill for £120 to assist me in furnishing my house. This has been renewed, and becomes due in January. He hopes to be able to pay it, and I fondly imagined I would have paid the half; but this canvass has only involved me in new difficulties ; and besides, I have endeavoured to assist my sister (who has been the only mother I ever knew) to go out to Van Diemen's Land. . . . As it is now, I am self-sufficient enough to think that I am as well off as regards station in my profession as any who started here in the race of life with me. They have all, I believe, in this race been aided by friends or by private wealth. They have almost all been fortunate enough to have the protection of a father's roof during the first years of practice. I have had no such advantages, but have stood and worked alone. . . . I have accumulated for myself a library and museum worth £200, at least, amidst these difficulties. This I have won by my pen and my lancet, and these (as I have already told Jessie herself) are my only fortune. And now, could you trust her future happiness to me under such circumstances? I did not intend to ask her hand at present. I fondly hoped I might have *first* cleared myself of my debts." He then pointed out that the fact of his losing patients because he was unmarried, and that his celibacy was urged against him in his

candidateship for the Chair, were sufficient reasons for his pressing his suit.

Any one of his opponents could have filled Dr. Hamilton's chair with credit to himself and honour to the University. Several of them were men of eminence, and had already won a name in their profession. His social standing, youth, and want of experience were all against him. But, on the other hand, he had done more for the science of his profession in a couple of years, than any one of them had done in a decade. And what he had done was full of rich promise and marked by methods of observation and research thoroughly scientific. He had also shown skill as a practitioner, and the formed "habit of the pen" as a writer. Conscious of all this, he claimed the attention of men on the merits, apart altogether from the testimony of others to his ability. Proudly aware of this, he placed the record of what he had done and written on the front of his application to the Town Council. Testimonials, remarkable for their freshness, heartiness, and strength, flanked his statement of work and thought. Every step he took or allowed others to take in his behalf, was marked by skill, insight, energy, and quiet resolve. "Did I not feel I am the best man for the Chair," he said, "I would not go in for it." The effect of all this, especially on some of the older men in the University, was curious. An individuality of the most pronounced kind was making itself felt. A force was influencing both them and the patrons, whose nature and tendencies they had not been able to gauge or to define. The most judicious and wise among them were puzzled, and did not know what to make of this determination and effort. Claims of capacity were alleged, and proofs of capacity offered; but these were not regarded; and men, from whom only academical reserve, dignity, and calm impartiality might have been expected, hastened, almost uncalled, into the strife as fierce partisans. Even Sir Charles Bell wrote a note, unworthy of him, to Dr. Traill, sympathizing with him and his colleagues in their efforts

to secure the Chair for another, adding that he had written a letter, "to entreat the patrons to look more to the condition and to the situations the candidates had filled with credit, than to their bundles of certificates, . . . some of which, I must say, have already by inference put shame upon us all." Yet the gentleman whom Sir Charles favoured lodged documents in his own behalf extending to more than 150 large octavo pages. "Great men are not always wise."

Nevertheless the testimonials did their work well, as in most circumstances they ever do. The patrons were not partisans. They had no other way of ascertaining what a man had done in a special department, except through the opinions of men well qualified, on the merits, to give them. Common sense and intelligence were the only qualities needed on the part of the patrons. These they brought to bear on the matter in hand, and to the impartial exercise of these is to be traced the generally satisfactory character of the appointments made to University Chairs by the Edinburgh Town Council.

On the 22d January 1840 he wrote to Mr. Grindlay :—

"My dear Mr. Grindlay,—If you only were here for a few hours to see the bustle and turmoil connected with the closing weeks of a canvass, I am sure you would excuse me not writing oftener. Last night was the first in which I have sat for a couple of successive hours, since I came back, at my own fireside, between tea and supper. I have been up at four and five, busy—and am preparing to sit up all night to-night to finish a catalogue of my museum, which I am to print off to-morrow and next day. Dr. Kennedy has stolen a march upon me on that point, and I am, and have been for a week or two, working double tides to make up. He is leading us all into a great deal of additional expense in printing, and unnecessarily, as we can show that we have better museums than his.

"The contest now lies between Dr. Kennedy and me, and each sends his spurs deeper into his horse's sides as we approach the winning-post. A very good sign is, that a number of Dr. Kennedy's friends have begun to traduce me—I am everything

bad, perhaps beat my wife by their accounts. I value their attempts at their proper price, and can laugh them all to scorn. Some even of the Professors have begun it, as they seem in great dread that I, a 'poor baker's son,' should be made their equal or superior. I know not how the election will end. I conceive now that I run a capital chance. It will probably be turned by one or two votes. Mr. Ritchie of the *Scotsman*, a Councillor, is marshalling all my Liberal supporters, and Mr. Drysdale[1] all my Conservative ones. I hope to be at least second—and that is assuredly something. But I must off to my catalogue again, and with kindest love to Mrs. Grindlay and family, believe me, your affectionate son,

"J. Y. Simpson, M.D."

And again, three days before the election :—

"The canvass stands thus: Dr. Kennedy and I are almost the only candidates. There are thirty-three voters, and I have secured *fifteen* of them, and if I can manage to get two more, which is extremely dubious yet, the Chair is mine. At the worst, I will be able to show myself the best man for it in Scotland, and that is something. All my friends say it will at least advance me mightily in practice in a year or two, if I continue to work as I have done, which I *shall* do, if my health permits.

"Jessie and I were up at four this morning, writing the last part of a catalogue of my museum. It is now near twelve at night, and I have to go to the High Street to look after the printers and their work. I will slip this as I pass into the post—but, as the money office is shut at this late hour, you will require to pay 2d. for it. I will write the result of Tuesday's poll."

As the day of the election drew near, the unusual interest taken in the city and among the students in this appointment increased. Reports were spread that Dr. Simpson's chief opponent, though a good practitioner, was a bad lecturer, and his friends took a step, always hazardous in such circumstances :—

[1] The late Sir William Drysdale.

they brought him to Edinburgh to deliver a public popular lecture, within a few days of the decision. I was present, and felt, as many other students did, that it would not damage Dr. Simpson. One patron was said to waver, but he was not likely to be influenced by this lecture. On the day of the election the Council Chambers were crowded by students and others, and when it was announced that Dr. Simpson had a majority of one, loud and prolonged cheers filled the hall. But nothing could better illustrate the great and wide interest taken in this election, than the following extracts from the MS. diary of a man of the time—the late Dr. Patrick Neill, of Canonmills, printer, philosopher, and naturalist. Professor Fleming had written to Dr. Simpson—

"I am fully satisfied that your claims are very strong, and ought to be respected. Under such circumstances, I have sent off a letter to my old and valued friend Dr. Neill, urging your claims upon his notice in such a manner as to induce him, I have no doubt, to attend to them, and see that you get *fair play*. I have likewise written in equally strong terms to another old and valued friend who has a seat at the Council Board, and who, I am confident, will be equally attentive—Sir John Graham Dalyell."

But Neill continued opposed to, and Sir John Graham Dalyell voted against, Dr. Simpson. Neill's Diary runs thus,—

"13 *Jan.* 1840.

"MIDWIFERY CHAIR.

"I *guess* that the vote may at first stand thus—

Kennedy, . . .	12	Simpson, . . .	10
Campbell, . . .	6	Thatcher, . . .	3
Renton, . . .	2		

Thatcher and Renton going off, I *guess* that the ultimate vote may stand thus :—

Kennedy, . . .	18
Simpson, . . .	15
	33

Nous verrons.

"15 *Jan.* 1840.

". . . Observed that the Whig party are apparently urging the election of Dr. Simpson as Obstetrician, to prevent his standing in the way of Dr. William Thomson's getting the Chair of General Pathology.

"23 *Jan.* 1840.

"Mr. Drysdale has announced that he knows of a majority for Dr. Simpson already! This, if true, is the result of a job! For great experience is peculiarly required in the Obstetric Chair. *Nous verrons.*

"Town Council, 28*th Jan.* 1840.

"Lord Provost proposed that Dr. Kennedy should have a room to lecture in, *intra mœnia*, some having reported that he was far from fluent! But this was strenuously resisted! I fear, now, that Simpson will have a majority of one or two! This is deplorable; for we shall lose a man of great eminence.

"1*st Feb.* 1840.

"Midwifery Chair.

"It having been reported that Dr. Evory Kennedy had no utterance, he this day was advised to show his fluency in a public lecture. The small Assembly Room was crowded, and he acquitted himself well. But whether this will aid his cause I question.

"*Tuesday*, 4*th Feb.* 1840.

"At Town Council to-day Provost Forrest proposed Dr. Evory Kennedy, seconded by Tr. Stodart. Bailie Ramsay proposed Dr. Simpson, seconded by Mr. Drysdale. On a division 17 voted for Dr. Simpson and 16 for Dr. Kennedy—all the 33 being present."

Dr. Simpson ever felt most deeply indebted to the majority of the Town Council on this occasion. In addition to the names of Mr. Ritchie of the *Scotsman* and Sir William Drysdale, those of Bailie Grieve, Dean of Guild Law, late Lord Provost, and Mr. Duncan M'Laren, now M.P. for the city, are

mentioned by him as friends who exerted themselves most heartily in his behalf.

Immediately after the election he wrote to his Liverpool relatives :—

"My dear Mother,—Jessie's honeymoon and mine is to begin to-morrow. I was elected Professor to-day by a Majority of One. Hurrah!!! Your ever affectionate son,

"J. Y. Simpson."

To his father-in-law :—

"My dear Father,—I was this day elected *Professor*. My opponent had 16 and I had 17 votes. All the *political* influence of both the leading Whigs and Tories here was employed against me ; but never mind—I have got the Chair in despite of them, Professors and all. Jessie and Mina send their kindest love. Jessie's honeymoon and mine is to *commence* to-morrow.—Your affectionate son, J. Y. Simpson.

"*Tuesday, 4th Feb.*, 1 Dean Terrace."

Congratulations followed the election from men of science at home and abroad, from patients, old school-fellows, and relatives. His sister Mary's was perhaps more welcome than any. The ship in which she and her husband had embarked for Van Diemen's Land was still in the English Channel, and Mary received early notice of his success. "My dear, dear, and fortunate brother," she wrote, "I have taken up my pen to wish you joy, joy, but I feel I am scarcely able to write. I never believed till now that excess of joy was worse to bear than excess of grief. I cannot describe how, but I certainly feel as I never did all my life. I hope we will still be here to-morrow to learn all the particulars of this happy event. My dear, dear James, may God Himself bless you, and prosper you in all your ways.—Your sincerely affectionate sister, Mary Pearson." Mary had guided him from childhood with deep and

watchful love. In her care and keeping he had often felt "as one whom his mother comforteth." Her praise had frequently been to him an excitement and spur to exertion. The care with which he preserved her note from "Ramsgate Harbour," shows how much calm content it had given him—linking, as it forcibly did, this triumph in a great contest with the memory of all the love and encouragement that he had received from her and his brothers, but chiefly from her and his beloved "Sandy."

CHAPTER V.

Courage and Work—Squabble, 1840—Attitude of the Medical Faculty —Removes from Dean Terrace to Albany Street—Increase of Practice — Professional Literature — Dr. Sharpey — Expenses — Money Difficulties—Love for Sandy—Self-Help—Continuous hard Work—Birth of a Daughter—Walter Gilchrist—Bathgate Bairns— Introductory Lecture—Success as a Lecturer—Large Class—Maggie —Increase of Income.

Of the three objects which Dr. Simpson had set before him, when he became an extra-academical lecturer, one, name, had been established by the work that culminated in the Professorship. Another, bread, as the reward of work, began to follow. The third, fame, had yet to be won. Even when anticipating defeat as a candidate for the Chair, he saw his way to a large and lucrative practice, should he work as earnestly in the future as he had done in the past—"which," he said, "I shall do, if health permit." His triumph in no way weakened his will for work. Indeed, it was stronger than before, and he set about doing what lay to his hand with characteristic promptness, energy, and application. "Never before was he so thoroughly among the strife of tongues and minds." The greater the difficulties, the greater his determination to overcome them. Opposition which would have disheartened most other men, only roused him to greater exertion. Never was strong swimmer more elated in breasting big waves, than Dr. Simpson was when battling for what he believed to be truth, or in pushing into use, in the face of strong resistance, new or improved methods of professional

treatment. Conscious of high devotion to his profession, greedy for extensive usefulness, counting on the fame it sooner or later brings, and endowed with powers of mind where great natural strength had been sedulously cultivated, trained, and disciplined in those wide fields of knowledge and research in which from boyhood he had sought to walk, he was not only ever on the watch for effective remedies for the sore ills that flesh is heir to—he had also the will and the skill to defend his views against all comers. In the advocacy or defence of new methods of treatment, or of new remedies, he seldom took into account the prejudices, or even the honest convictions, of others. It was enough for him, if what he proposed seemed to himself good for his patients and defensible in science. The physician is for the patient, and the good of the patient must be his first and only care. To this point Dr. Simpson went straight and at once. But in reaching it he often trampled on the long-cherished convictions of professional brethren, and in consequence made many enemies. Keen eyes watched him at every step. Men whose accomplishments were at this time equal to his own, and whose experience was greater, carefully scrutinized his views and observed his methods. The slightest mistake would have been as an opening in the joints of his harness, which sharpened arrows were sure to find quickly. Even prior to his election as Professor, these characteristic features had been fully discovered, and they explain and account for some of the personal bitterness that mixed with the opposition to his claims. But at that time, and often afterwards, he had his reward in the love of his patients, in the extension of science, in the thanks of his fellow-men, and in the devoted attachment to his person of many of the most thoughtful and accomplished of the young men of his own profession.

As Professor Simpson could not enter on the work of his Chair till the following session, he was inclined to finish the spring course of lectures previously intimated, but was otherwise advised. His friend Dr. J. B. Fleming, Manor Place,

Edinburgh, who was present at the last meeting of the students of the extra-academical class, says—"A few days after Dr. Simpson's election to the Professorship in 1840, I was asked by two more advanced students, who had been his pupils in the previous summer, to accompany them to see him give his prizes.

"I accordingly went with them, and we proceeded to a class-room in a detached building, situated between old Surgeons' Hall and the Infirmary, and then occupied by him and by Dr. Allen Thomson; this must subsequently have been swept away, for its site is now occupied by some of the wards of the Surgical Hospital.

"We took our seats amongst the students who had attended his winter course of lectures, and Dr. Simpson soon came in. He presented his prizes in his usual genial and kindly way, making a few remarks on the Examination Papers as he proceeded, after which he dismissed the class in words, as nearly as I can recollect, as follows—'It has been notified, gentlemen, that I would commence a spring course of three months' lectures on Midwifery in a few days hence; but since then, having been elected to the Professorship of Midwifery, I have been informed that it would not be suitable for me to do so when the six months' course was proceeding in the University; that course will therefore now not be delivered, and I can only assure you that it will be my great object to show to the patrons that they have not bestowed on me the gown of Dr. Hamilton in vain.'"

His first academical experience was disheartening. Among his papers is a small packet of letters marked "Squabble, 1840." The matter itself is unworthy of notice. I refer to it in order to indicate the source of other and more important misunderstandings, that afterwards arose between Dr. Simpson and several of his colleagues. At a meeting of the medical faculty shortly after his election, the Deanship was offered to him in circumstances and in a manner that seemed to present active traces of the strong spirit of opposition shown to him by many

of the Professors when a candidate for the Chair. In refusing the appointment, he had spoken in a way that gave offence, especially to the Professor of Botany. On reaching home, he sent the following note to Dr. Graham :—

"DEAR SIR,—I feel much distressed at the idea that you should suppose me capable of entertaining or expressing any doubt whatever of what you stated, as your *personal* belief, in the meeting this afternoon. If I used any word or expression that could be so interpreted (and really I can recollect none such), it was at least as far as possible from my heart and wishes to do so. You are one of the very last of the medical faculty whose good opinion I should wish to forfeit.

"It is probable that you may continue to look upon my line of conduct to-day as an unfortunate one. It possibly may be so; but if you had been placed in the same position in all respects as I have been during and since my election, I fear you would have found yourself under the necessity of acting in the very same manner. At least, now that the matter is over, I do feel that I have done right in refusing the Secretaryship under the extraordinary circumstances in which it was offered to me, though the doing so was a duty a thousand times more painful than all the trouble connected with it could have been.—Yours very respectfully, J. Y. SIMPSON.

"*Tuesday, quarter after* 5 P.M."

To this frank, manly, and generous note, Dr. Graham replied :—

"62 GREAT KING STREET, 19*th May* 1840.

"Dr. Graham has received Dr. Simpson's letter of this date. He will not again argue the matter to which it relates, and he has now neither right nor inclination to advise. He cannot think his own conduct requires explanation; he merely begs to state the position in which, in his opinion, matters stand, and are likely to remain.

"Dr. Simpson alludes to circumstances 'during' his election. These are, that his colleagues preferred another candidate for the Chair of Midwifery, and used their best endeavours to procure his election. They may have been mistaken, and after the election every one of them wished to find it so.

"Dr. Simpson alludes to circumstances after his election. These are the subjects of the present discussion, which Dr. Simpson thinks were derogatory to him, and meant to be so. He persists in asserting this, notwithstanding a solemn denial from every one of his colleagues. He ought to know that this is flying in the face of the ordinary courtesies of life, the common rules of civilized society, and cannot but render utterly nugatory the desire of every member of the University, that the right hand of fellowship, given in all sincerity to Dr. Simpson after his election, should be the pledge of kindly feeling and constant exertion for mutual benefit and the prosperity of the medical school."

Few will wonder that in these circumstances the following reply was returned:—

"Dr. Simpson is in receipt, through this morning's post, of Dr. Graham's note of yesterday.

"In that note Dr. Graham states that Dr. Simpson conceives the measures about the Deanship 'derogatory to him, and meant to be so.' Dr. Simpson does certainly think that measure, from its time and circumstance, derogatory to him, but he did not found that opinion on the ground that it was *meant* by the Faculty to be so.

"Dr. Graham avers that Dr. Simpson has received 'a solemn denial from every one of his colleagues' of any intention of personal disrespect in the matter. With several of his medical colleagues Dr. Simpson never interchanged one single word on the subject.

"Dr. Simpson considers it beneath his dignity as a gentleman to rebut the insinuations made against him in Dr. Graham's

note regarding his want of knowledge 'of the ordinary courtesies of life,' and 'the common rules of civilized society.' If Dr. Graham's conduct yesterday, and his note of this morning, are specimens of the ordinary courtesies of life as understood by Dr. G. (among the Medical Faculty), they are (Dr. Simpson must confess) very different from any that he has hitherto been accustomed to.

"1 Dean Terrace, 20*th May* 1840."

To the regret of many who take a lively interest in the University, misunderstandings of this kind have been frequent. This is given as a fair specimen. The records of several occur among Dr. Simpson's papers, but it is not my intention to refer to any except such as have wider moral or scientific bearings. It is clear from Dr. Graham's note that he shared in that wretched and unworthy feeling against "the son of the baker," which had shown itself in much bitterness during the canvass. But the new Professor was not to be put down. The weight of his presence in the Faculty was at once felt. "I have," he wrote to Mr. Grindlay, "been battling with my brother Professors since I came home in order to support the dignity of my Chair, and I hope have sufficiently shown them that I am their equal in professional rank."

The hostile attitude of active partisanship shown to him by, I believe, a majority of the University medical faculty during his canvass for the Chair is sufficient to account for, if not even to excuse and vindicate, his suspicion of their want of cordiality when he first took his place among them as an equal and as a fellow-worker. It is never expedient for Professors to take an active part in filling up a vacant Chair in their own College or University. They may bear testimony in the strongest terms they choose to the fitness and ability of any one candidate, but here their interference should stop. Private letters to patrons, or to members of the electing body depreciating individual candidates, and private communications pleading personal or political obligations in favour of the man of

their choice, almost always find their way to the public. For Professors to engage in work of this kind is as little in accord with academical dignity as with fair play. No doubt, no one can be more deeply interested in the welfare and efficiency of the College or University than the Professors themselves, and by certificate they have full scope to show this. But since the election does not lie with them, they act injudiciously when, by any other means, they try to direct it. Perhaps, however, the most dignified attitude in all such cases is that of perfect neutrality. Then there can be no alienation between fellow-workers, no want of complete cordiality, and none of that suspicion of purity of motive on either side when friends find themselves in opposition, often

"Beyond prevention of man's wisest care."

For some time Dr. Simpson's practice as a physician had been steadily increasing. He left the house in Dean Terrace, and removed to 22 Albany Street, which he rented for several years. After his election to the Professorship, the increase of his practice was rapid and important. "I have made a bargain for a carriage," he wrote to his brother. "I have been up all night writing a paper. Saw yesterday one Viscountess and three 'Ladies.' Good for one day among the nobility." His household and other expenses were now so heavy, and so many demands were made on him almost daily to help old acquaintances or to give his time to the poor, whom he ever willingly waited on professionally, that he was in some danger of yielding to the temptation to forsake authorship for the more readily remunerative work of daily practice. But his friend Dr. Sharpey, for whom through life he cherished the warmest love and admiration, kept him at his pen. His own bent towards the literature of his profession was so strong, that the "kindly commands" of his friend fell on willing ears, and found a ready response.

"London, 20*th May* 1840.

"My dear Simpson,—Tweedie has just called upon me in

utter despair about your paper. Unless you continue to give it him, he says he will lose credit altogether with the publishers. . . . I have no interest in the matter, but I really, in commiseration for Tweedie, have ventured on the liberty of *admonishing you.* I hear that a set of people have been conspiring to annoy you, and that they have commenced their petty vexations; how sorry I am to hear some of their names; but all such attempts lead in the end to a reaction, for the great mass are in favour of *fair play.* Write your paper, and put for a motto 'Despectu Inimicorum,' as Frederick did when he built a palace in the thick of warfare.

"I have made some observations since I saw you, which I think are not uninteresting, of which more anon.

"Compliments to all mutual friends, etc., and believe me ever, my dear Simpson, very truly yours, W. SHARPEY."

Hitherto his personal wants had been so few, and his desires so limited, that the £50 of salary received from Professor Thomson during the years of his assistantship satisfied him. Afterwards the fees of the extra-academical class, the small income from practice, and the moderate *honorarium* brought by most of his papers, kept him in comparative comfort, enabled him to add to his library, and to form a museum of some value. But when he entered on housekeeping in Dean Terrace, and especially when he took steps to forward his candidateship for the Chair, he began to find that the relations between expenditure and income were not satisfactory. In full view of this he "married in faith." For his wife's sake, moreover, he had in terms of a post-nuptial contract taken steps to insure his life for £2000. The expense connected with the candidateship for the Chair was about £500, spent chiefly in printing and postage. He had been working in comparative obscurity. A few of his professional friends knew what he was, what he had done, and what he could do, but he wished to put this information before the public. Thus the very wide circulation of his testimonials. He had resolved to be at the top of his

profession, with the intelligent consent of practitioners and patients. Had he lost the Professorship, he would have taken a foremost place among his fellows as physician and accoucheur.

Dr. Arnold was wont to say, "It is not labour but vexation that hurts the man." Dr. Simpson had now both the labour and the vexation. The thought that they were his by his own free choice lightened the labour, but increased the vexation. He had hope, a will to work, and remunerative work in abundance, but the rewards were still in the future. One responsibility and another had been undertaken, in the belief that he could compel success. And he succeeded. But not unfrequently patients and publishers were not prompt in their payments. Meanwhile, wants were pressing, and pecuniary liabilities had to be met. He had hitherto had the means of his devoted brother Sandy to fall back on. But these were at this time invested in a business carried on by relatives, and were not available. Had they been within reach, Sandy would have used them more freely for "Dear James" than for himself. He felt his position very keenly. It was as hateful to him as it was humiliating. He was not a little discontented with his lot :—

"Thou found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so."

The discipline bore good fruits in after years. To the remembrance of his own condition and feelings at this period more than one young man was indebted for sympathy and substantial help, in the difficulties that beset the first years of professional life. "I am ashamed to apply to you," wrote M. from England, "but the loan of £50 would enable me to hold my place here till fees come in." The money was sent by next post.

In these difficulties his father-in-law came to his help, and he wrote :—"A few days ago my Scotch pride would have led me to scruple about using the money transmitted, even in the way in which you and Mrs. G. now propose, but I am enough myself

again to accept with deepest thanks your kind proposal. The delicacy with which you spontaneously proffered me the first loan months ago laid me under a deeper debt to you than the mere sum of money. . . . Let us understand one another thus far—I pay you regular loan interest for whatever I have already got or may require; I shall accept it on no other terms. My sister and brother-in-law have again sailed. My brother-in-law, it seems, was left £40,000 by the last will his brother made in 1836. Your grateful and faithful son-in-law, J. Y. S."

These and the references that follow to money transactions are made, not only with the view of bringing out the difficulties which beset the opening of a great career, but also, and chiefly, to illustrate what I might almost call his "helpless simplicity" in the management of his own money affairs, and generally in purely business matters. But for the abundant proofs I have found among his papers, I would have been the last to credit this. Yet the conviction is irresistible. In all such matters, he trusted with perfect and implicit confidence, both in the honesty and the disinterestedness of all that approached him. Having clearly seen the end in view, he left others to work it out in their way, and went on with his own duties. He had ever a great aversion to reading legal documents and to going thoroughly into the formal statement of business details. A good illustration of this occurs in connexion with the post-nuptial contract just referred to. Others, in cases from which he suffered serious loss, might be given. He wrote to Mr. Grindlay: —"I am most anxious there should be a marriage-contract. The tenure of life, particularly of medical life, is so uncertain, that all contingencies should be guarded against, as far as lies in our power." The matter was accordingly trusted to English lawyers, and Dr. Simpson thought no more about it. The completed document reached him, and, as his brother's signature was required, he forwarded it to Bathgate without having read it. Sandy, finding that the deed interfered both with his brother's liberty in the use of his own income, and excluded

himself from all claim in law, in the event of his death, to be reimbursed from his property to the extent of his loans, returned it without his signature; expressing his grief that the brother, whom he so much loved and for whom he had done so much, should have asked him to be a party to such a contract. He was not aware that James knew nothing of the obnoxious clauses. Dr. Simpson was greatly vexed when he learned that his favourite brother had associated these clauses with his intention and wish, and that his friends in England blamed him for the miscarriage of the contract. "As soon as the contract reached Edinburgh," he informed Mr. Grindlay, "I wrote a note to my brother, asking him to sign it, and Jessie sealed up the whole and sent it off next post. It was returned in the course of two or three days, with the letter which I have here enclosed, and which has caused me (from the very suspicion hinted at in it with regard to my intentions) much more mental pain than I should choose to confess to. I did not look into the deed in any way before sending it on to Bathgate, and now that I have done so, I cannot but conclude that it would also be foolish in me to adhibit my name to it as it at present stands." Yet there is not the least doubt he would have signed it at once, without looking it over, had it been returned with Sandy's signature. He added—"I could not do so without incurring the greatest chance of my brother Alexander's displeasure and want of further confidence in me. I value his good opinion above that of all mortal beings, saving that of my wife alone." He then discusses the business aspects of the document with all that ability, clearness, thoroughness, and tact, which he ever showed when compelled to master the details of any subject. But this matter vexed and hurt him. "I have," wrote Mrs. Simpson to her father, "left James asleep at present, though restless and uneasy. He has been in bed for the last two days. He complains of pains over his body, especially in the head and side, with palpitation. If the first deed we signed be quite legal and binding, why insist on that long rigmarole confused

eighteen-page one, which is so different, and would lay down the law for what it has no business with, and for what it was never asked to interfere in?" "The rigmarole" was dispensed with, and a deed adopted in its place, amounting to little more than the mutual—"All mine shall be thine, after payment of lawful debts." The relatives in Liverpool and in Bathgate were alike satisfied. The domestic shadow passed away. But not before it had set in bold relief his deep affection for Sandy, and his almost painfully acute sensitiveness to relative and domestic trial. "First of all let me explain to you how very groundlessly you throw blame upon my brother and his motives. He has throughout life been my best and truest friend—my father in most senses of the word. In our village he is looked upon at this hour by all as a pattern of the strictest integrity. Richard and you are at liberty to attribute to me whatever motives you please, but I pray you attribute none to my brother, except of the purest honour and honesty—for I am convinced that he at least has not, and never had, a motive of action in this or in any other case, that was not as spotless as the unsunned snow. It grieves me a thousand times more to think him blamed, than it would to have that blame placed on my own shoulders." But this strong attachment was not limited to his favourite brother. It folded in its warm embrace, and in a very tender way, all the members of his father's house. Its manifestation in his own household was free and constant. Those near to him not only shared in his care, they got the full love of his large heart. No trial was felt so keenly as that connected with members of his own household. When stroke after stroke came, for the time they seemed to crush him. He could bear, without much effort, wounds from his fellows, and he could draw something like delight from struggles which he believed to be in the interests of science or of humanity, even when they separated him from acquaintances and friends. But when trials touched those on whom he lavished his affection, they prostrated him at once. Nervous headaches, pain in the

side, and palpitation, soon showed the intensity of his sorrow. In youth, the influence of such trials was not so protracted as afterwards. His natural enjoyment of life and health, his thirst for knowledge, the claims of necessary work, and the absorbing desire for extensive usefulness, soon counteracted tendencies to sadness and depression. But later it was different, because—

> "When sore affliction comes
> In the decline of life, 'tis like a storm
> Which, in the rear of Autumn, shakes the tree
> That frost had touched before; and strips it bare
> Of all its leaves."

When it came thus to him, He who uses sorrow for the highest ends with regard to His own children had provided for him a refuge, had "covered him with an excellent covering," given him to understand "that no man should be moved by these afflictions," and led him to "know that we are appointed thereunto."

"Self-help" was the burden of the earliest lesson Dr. Simpson had received, and its influence on him was now more apparent than ever. He had still to struggle with straitened circumstances, and to face responsibilities difficult to be met. The expenses of housekeeping were week by week increasing. He had to pay with punctuality the premiums of his life insurance, and the interest of borrowed money. But his feet now stood on a platform where, if health were continued, a brilliant success was sure. This thought upheld him, and he worked with a persistency, heartiness, and determination truly marvellous. After days of unceasing toil, he refused to give to sleep more than three or four hours. He laboured, apparently without distraction, in circumstances in which, to most men, work would have been almost impossible. Patients began to crowd his house. From the outset he exercised a singularly attractive influence over the sick, and those who imagined themselves sick. Schemes of philanthropy got his attention. Friends sought his advice on matters outside his profession, and

he took up their case as if he had nothing else to do. Strangers addressed him very much as if they regarded him a kind of Attorney-General for the civilized world. Authors forwarded their works, requesting his opinion or praying for a word in their behalf. Young artists sought his patronage. Archæologists began to regard him as an authority, and to present many an A.D.L.L. to be deciphered.[1] Parents, whom he had never looked in the face before, came to consult him about wayward sons, who had outgrown parental control, or who, they were sure, were very clever, if only their speciality could be found. A retired captain had discovered the constituents of a pill which, he was persuaded, would, if believed in and taken as he directed, bring the duration of human life back again to that of the ante-diluvian patriarchs,—"Would not Dr. Simpson introduce it among his patients?" A dashing Yorkshireman wrote as "the friend of a friend of a former fellow-student," informing him that he was a devoted and enthusiastic disciple of "Old Isaak." He had learned that Dr. Simpson was attending the wife of a nobleman, on whose property were streams that supplied excellent sport for fly-fishers,—"He would feel for ever obliged could he get him and another friend of his friend liberty to fish." He had a willing ear, a kind word, a wise or weighty advice for each, as the case required. Even stupid communications were noticed. He had not yet begun to "let these odd letters answer themselves."

At night he gave himself to the preparation of class lectures, and papers in the literature of his profession. But almost nightly, and often several times in a night, when cosily

[1] Oldbuck.—"The stone bears a sacrificing vessel, and the letters A.D.L.L., which may stand, without much violence, for *Agricola Dicavit Libens Lubens*."

. . . . . .

Edie Ochiltree.—"Ye'll find, if ye have not fund it already, a stane that ane o' the mason callants cut out a ladle on to have a bourd at the bridegroom, and he put four letters on't, that's A.D.L.L.—Aiken Drum's Lang Ladle—for Aiken was ane o' the kail-suppers o' Fife."

—*The Antiquary*, ch. iv.

seated and in the midst of an interesting or difficult theme, the ring of the door-bell told him of a summons to the bedside of a patient. He soon began to know how the visitor regarded the case, according as the ring was spasmodic and abrupt, quiet and low, or loud but stately. The evil effects of all this work and anxiety again and again showed themselves. Headaches—nervous, digestive, cerebral—palpitation, and acute pain in the region of the heart, frequently forced him to take to bed. While helping and healing so many he took scant care of his own health. "Well or ill," he said, "I must work. In fact, I can't afford to be ill." Even in the beginning of his career, his work was thus engrossing, and he gave himself to it heartily and enthusiastically. But never merely for the money it was expected to fetch. This was, no doubt, present as a motive, but there was nothing base in it. On the contrary, when the pursuit of riches goes hand in hand with generous feelings and noble, unselfish acts, it takes its place in the list of the highest of human efforts. Had the getting of gain been Dr. Simpson's ruling motive, he would have looked more closely after his fees, and have given less of his valuable time to work that brought no fee. When urged by relatives and others to regulate the management of practice so as to make the fee secure, he answered—"I prefer to have my reward in the gratitude of my patients."

On the 16th of October 1840 Mrs. Simpson gave birth to their first child. The day following he wrote to Mr. Grindlay. —"Jessie is exceedingly well to-day. Her daughter is a nice, fat, sonsy, black-eyed lady, who seems to think that she has nothing to do in this world except sleep and sip sugar and water. May Heaven bless her little ladyship, and make her path through life as smooth as this of her first day's existence! . . .

"I am busy preparing for my winter labours. I am far yet from *feeling* so strong as I could wish, and must take care of myself for the winter, so as to be able to continue my duties throughout it. I don't care about a hard run at work so far as

I myself am concerned, but as Dr. Thomson lectures me, I must be cautious now, if not for my own, at least for my wife and daughter's sakes.

"My drosky is to be ready next week. It will help me through with my work for the winter. It is expensive to buy as well as keep, but I had no alternative but to get one, both to support my rank among my wealthier compeers, and to save my body from excess of work, when there was (as there is during the winter lecturing season) little time left to devote to it."

The earliest intimation of the birth had been sent to Bathgate, whence inquiries and congratulations soon reached him. The Bathgate people of that day regarded John Fleming, John Reid, and James Simpson with great affection. Tidings of their success brought joy to all, and those even who had never spoken to them rejoiced as if a personal boon had been conferred. Among the communications that reached Dr. Simpson, on the birth of his child, was one from an old schoolfellow, Walter Gilchrist. Gilchrist had served an apprenticeship as a shoemaker, at which trade he was then working. Like Simpson, he had been early smitten with a love of learning, and an earnest desire to devote himself to the study of Medicine.

"BATHGATE, *Oct. 20th*, 1840, *Tuesday.*

"MY DEAR JAMES,—I hear that you are now a father—ay, a father,—and I write to congratulate you on the happy occasion.

"You can readily conceive that the news of the birth produced a train of odd cogitation in me. 'Ay,' said I, 'and Simpson is a father. He has had a most eventful career during the last twelve months. In May 1839 a lodger, same month a householder, in November a candidate for *the Chair*, in December a *husband*, in February 40 a *Professor*, in October a *Father*.' These were the points in your career on which my imagination lighted as I ran back the catalogue of immediate events. I need not tell you what I thought when I reflected

on us being at school together, for these would fill a volume. Besides, we have conned over the same subjects before.

". . . May Mrs. Simpson soon be restored to health and to the hearth, and may her—your (shall I strike out the *y*)—little daughter continue to improve in strength and health, and as she grows in years and personal grace, may the respect and esteem of mankind, and the favour of her God be her portion!

"I must remark, however, that the hurry in the house will, I fear, have done some damage to the Introductory. On this subject I have my fears; I trust you will be far advanced with it. Recollect, go the length of rehearsal. Eloquence,—that is, speaking eloquence,—is looked for, and you must give them a little. Dr. Dawson and Mr. Todd are coming in to hear you, and I should not wonder although there might be others.

". . . I am labouring away at the Epitome of Surgery. . . . Let the first impression be good and effective.—I remain, my dear James, yours ever affectionately,

"WALTER GILCHRIST.

"*To* PROFESSOR SIMPSON, *now father of a family.*"

Some years ago I heard an old minister say, in Dr. Simpson's presence—"When I think of Fleming and Reid and Simpson, I cease to wonder at any news of the rise of a 'Bathgate bairn.'" Here was another giving himself to shoemaking and surgery; labouring at the last while mastering a handbook of science. Gilchrist ultimately graduated, and, through Dr. Simpson's help and influence, became a practitioner in Leith. There were other school-fellows equally clever, who, however, signally failed in the race. "You see that man slaking lime, and half hid in the vapour," said Dr. Simpson to his friend Dr. Archibald Graham. "When a boy, he was the cleverest of our class, and a great friend of mine. Love of whisky has been his ruin. He might have risen higher than any of us, but now he is scarcely fit to be a poor hodman."

In the beginning of November 1840 Dr. Simpson delivered his introductory lecture as Professor of Midwifery, to a crowded

class of students and personal friends. The lecture was a great success, and fully answered the expectations of his hearers.

"A man may be known by his look, and one that hath understanding by his countenance, when thou seest him." At this period it would have been impossible for any intelligent observer to pass Dr. Simpson, even in a crowd, without being attracted by his appearance. The form, as a whole, was more slender, and the face-furrows of thought were less deep and broad than in mature years, yet all the characteristic features of his person were boldly outlined. Though in height a little below the average stature of his countrymen, strangers seldom noticed this, because of the general massiveness of his appearance. He could even stand side by side with Christopher North, and suffer less by the contrast than taller men. His frame, compact and well-knit in all its parts, ever suggested aspects of physical power generally associated with men of greater stature. A slight want of proportion between the trunk and the lower limbs gave an appearance of shortness of leg as compared with length of arm, and this was increased by his quick, short step in walking. His hands have been described as "typical medical hands"—an expression held to imply narrow palm and tapering fingers. But this is a mistake. The fingers were short and fleshy, the palm thick and broad, and the web of the palm covered more of the last joint of the fingers than is commonly the case. His sense of touch was exquisitely, almost painfully, delicate. To touch a rough substance—a bit of sandstone, for instance—"made," he said, "his flesh creep." His broad deep chest was coped by strong shoulders, whose thick plump muscle kept them from appearing square. A short neck, and his habit, when speaking, of bringing the point of the chin in on the breast, hid his throat and made head and chest look like one piece. There was a rounded massiveness about his whole frame. It had no corners. At any time he was never slightly made. Even in boyhood he was described as a "thick-set, fat, sonsy callant;" his characteristic mental vigour, strength of will, gentleness of disposition,

and general suavity of manners harmonized well with these physical features, and indeed were written on his countenance. They were seen in the height of forehead and breadth of brow, over which shaggy masses of hair pressed as if to protect it; in the free space between the eyes; in the deep lines which ran from the base of each curved and wide nostril to the angles of the mouth; in the firm upper lip, and the full under one, the broad chin, and long deep under-jaw; in the breadth of face across the cheeks, which in youth were marked by maiden-like dimples; and, generally, in the symmetrically developed large head, suggestive of what was afterwards found to be the case, "a large brain with enormously deep convolutions." The eyes were full, but the changeful light in them made it difficult to say what was their colour. They could not be said to be blue or grey or hazel, but they suggested each of these colours, tinged with a curious golden hue, according to the thought or emotion of the moment. All this begat the impression, even on those who came under his care for the first time, of rare mental power, combined with almost womanly tenderness and deep feeling. "Mira in sermone, mira etiam in ore ipso vultuque suavitas."

He was greatly delighted and encouraged by his large class. To Miss Grindlay—

"My dear Isabel,—Have intended to write for days and weeks past, but very busy, and every moment is gold.

"Am delighted, of course, with the class. Had to apply to the Council for additional sittings, and again for some days students standing for want of seats. For the first time in the history of the University the Midwifery is the first, I mean the largest, class within its walls. It is very satisfactory to have beat in the race not only my *friends* of the Medical Faculty, but all the thirty bald and grey-headed Professors. Dr. Alison, who changed his hour to lecture at the same one with me, has a very small class. Don't he deserve it? He has broken his own head and missed mine.

"I have drawn upwards of £600, with graduation fees included. I can't expect so large a class again, but then I hope my practice will improve and make up for it. No word of boarders, but all is so still and nice, my tea is so VERY cosy and comfortable when I come home at five—that—that I do wish I might get through my difficulties without them.

"The carriage sweeps along smartly. I could not get through without it this winter. Am a good boy, and rise always at four, but bed, if possible, at ten.

"Do you know, I sometimes fancy the students 'gane gyte' when they come crushing into the room to hear *me* lecture.

"'My daughter! oh my daughter.' Ay, there's the rub. I do love the little Marmazette so. She said not a word on Monday—was asleep during the ceremony. Mr. and Mrs. Macredie here. Won't answer yet to Maggie. Cannot get my tongue *around* Margaret. Jessie makes a famous nurse. . . .

"I got Mary's picture hung up to grace the baptism. May God bless her! I do think my little daughter like her.—Yours always.

J. Y. S."

To his brother—

"MY DEAR SANDY,—I send you the letter of credit for £100. I can, without inconvenience, send another £100 for a month. Have got the largest class in the University.—Yours ever,

J. Y. S."

He was now in good heart and hope. He could work without the anxiety, irritation, and distraction that pecuniary difficulties bring. He had not, indeed, got past the breakers, in this respect, and into calm, deep water; but he saw his way to it, and felt it to be near. Meanwhile, he thought to tide over the difficulties by receiving one or two young gentlemen as boarders. But he was not successful. "I heard of one boarder, but his relations now wish him to be a merchant, not a doctor. For Jessie's sake and my own I am glad."

CHAPTER VI.

Religious views—State of the Scottish Church—First Session as Professor—Illness—Memoir on Leprosy and Leper-houses—Minute and painstaking Research—Methods of Working—Extracts—Chair of General Pathology—Extracts—Professor Reid's Speech—Graduation Address—High views of Professional Responsibility—Interest in Church Affairs—The Disruption—Joins the Free Church.

WHILE attracting the attention of men by the manifestation of great powers, and intermeddling with most branches of knowledge, if not literally speculating *de omni scibili*, it is remarkable that, up to this period, there is scarcely a trace among Dr. Simpson's papers and correspondence of the least interest in religious matters, or even in the state of the Scottish Church, which, for several years, had been getting much attention from thoughtful men. One meets occasionally with that acknowledgment of "deity," so common even where there is no distinct or definite belief in a personal God. There is too the uninfluential use of the words "almighty," "providence," "creator," and "heaven," when called to witness striking events, or to endure personal or relative affliction. But this is often seen where there is no love for God as a Father, and no trust in Christ as a Saviour. In a word, there was that baptized heathenism which often becomes the broken reed on which noble and richly-endowed minds are content to lean. Several Churchmen, more than Church matters, had attracted his attention, in connexion with their advocacy of schemes of philanthropy. But it is abundantly evident that he had never

thought deeply, if at all, on his own relation to God, or his own hopes in time and for eternity. There are, indeed, proofs of deep unrest, at a time when onlookers may have thought his growing influence and rising fame were bearing the fruits of complete content and quiet satisfaction. Once and again we find him giving expression to this in a hazy way, stretching out his hands, but not unto God; craving for what came not to him in all the blessings wherewith God was crowning him. Some well-meaning, but not very judicious people, seeing his fast-increasing influence, and discerning in him the strong sense, manly brain, and tender heart, fitted to be of highest usefulness in the cause of Christ, wrote anonymous letters, or forwarded religious tracts under blank cover in the hope of influencing him. But the cowardice implied in attempting good in this way was sure to disgust him, as it does most men of sense. One or two of these communications he put away among his papers, with the mark "Religious!"

The absence of references in his correspondence to the contendings and claims of the Church is remarkable, because in Scotland these have ever been linked up with the extension of primary education, philanthropic zeal, and the revival of personal religion. We must seek the explanation of all this in the absorbing interest of scientific pursuits, professional struggles, and ever-deepening ambition during these years. In 1839 and 1840 he held his place in the race with the greatest difficulty.

So far as Church affairs were concerned, indifference could not long continue. The minds of most of his patients were full of them, and he was forced to give them his attention. After his marriage, he attended the able and impressive ministry of the late Dr. Muir of St. Stephen's Church. Dr. Muir's direct personal appeals from the pulpit, and the atmosphere of spirituality in which all his public services then stood out, could not fail at least to shed a healthy reflex influence over his hearers. His discourses were earnest and evangelical. Few could listen to them without being led to take some

interest in the cause of religion and in the work of their own Church. It was so with Dr. Simpson. Under Dr. Muir's ministry he began to think about religion, but without any efforts to become religious. He did not regard religion as a matter of vital moment to himself, but rather as a system of becomingnesses—that which, in some indefinite way, had relation to present life and hope, but was chiefly a thing whose value and use are for the future; good at death, but not in life. Now, though this acknowledgment often assumes the form of an easy and complacent patronage of Christianity, and serves as a substitute for love to the Saviour, it is not to be decried. They who rest in it may miss the highest blessing, but wherever it is honestly present, it brings good to the household and to the State.

Alive to everything connected with Bathgate, he was led by an incident that occurred there, in April 1841, to give his attention to Church controversies. The movements carried on by the Evangelical party in the Established Church, to secure for the people their right to a voice in the calling of ministers, and to provide chapels for destitute and populous districts, had evoked much opposition from Dissenters. Men of extreme political opinions not unfrequently disturbed the meetings, held by the Church party to advocate their views. "We had a row," wrote his brother, on the 1st of April, "in the kirk last night at a meeting called to petition Parliament for the abolition of Patronage. The Chartists filled the church, put William Robertson in the chair, and, of course, had it all their own way for a short time. But Mr. Martin (the parish minister) ordered the gas to be turned off, and after a good deal of howling they departed." The row in the Bathgate church led him to inquire into the views of the contending parties, and to look beyond them. As a Churchman, he sided with the Church party and his friend Mr. Martin. As influenced to some extent by the ministry of Dr. Muir, his sympathies went with the Evangelical, as opposed to the Moderate, party in the Church itself.

Dr. Simpson's first session as Professor of Midwifery bore conclusive testimony to the wisdom of the patrons in electing him, and showed clearly his singular fitness for the Chair. His genial bearing among the students, the earnest way in which he did the work of the class, the forcible and lucid style of his prelections, his breadth of view as a public teacher, the pleasant talk and sallies of quiet humour with which he often relieved the dry exposition of methods of research or the didactic statement of principles, the abundance and freshness of his illustrative facts, and his happy art of laying fields of thought outside of his profession under contribution, to give force and clearness to the special topics under review, all conduced to make him a favourite of the students generally, and to win the admiration, respect, and love of those who were foremost among them in mental power and accomplishments.

As the close of the session drew near, he began to yield to his archæological tastes, giving them, however, a professional direction. The insight he had obtained, when writing a paper on Malaria, into the relations between the sanitary condition of cities and the public health, convinced him that, in this department of research, much might be found to shed light on the notoriously insanitary state of Scotland in the past, and much also fitted to be of present use both to practitioners and sanitary reformers. Forms of disease—leprosy, for example—largely prevailed in Britain in times past, which are now rarely met with, except as stray cases. The task he proposed to himself for early spring-work was a memoir entitled "Antiquarian Notices of Leprosy and Leper-Houses in Scotland and England." His attention had for several years been turned to this subject, and he had gathered many facts, and consulted many works. Yet he began to put these in shape when he had work on hand that led him to say, "O that there were double twenty-four hours in the day!" But the busiest men have always most time for work, and the best work is always done

by those who have most to do. Busy idleness is the daily toil of many in all professions, and little good comes of it. Dr. Simpson sought and found relaxation in the work of his profession, by giving himself to true and hard work in departments outside of his daily duties. It is in the business of life as in the lessons at school. We find relief, freshness of spirit, and heart for more work, by turning from one task to the diligent pursuit of another which demands different methods, and calls into action entirely different powers. The youth who in one day is compelled to turn from Greek to Mathematics, or from the latter to Zoology, may, even though he work continuously, do equal justice to each branch of study. But though, to Dr. Simpson, work of this kind brought its reward in healthy intellectual impulses and fresh elasticity of spirit, he had had so much in hand during the session that he did not escape the penalty of overwork. This might have been expected. He had resolved to go early to bed, and to be up betimes in the morning, but throughout the session "late to bed and early to rise" had been his rule. When recovering from a very sharp and severe attack of illness, he wrote to Mrs. Grindlay :—

"My dear Mother,—I take up my pen to show you that I am well again. You ask the name of my ailments. The doctors (a horrid set !) alleged I had bilious fever. I was myself afraid it was to be another attack of common continued fever, but I got the turn on the third day. I am now nearly, if not quite, as strong as before. I was out with Dr. Robertson to-day, and had a walk in the Zoological Gardens with Johnnie, Maggie, and Janet Johnstone. I believe that, like other things which we often blindly look upon as misfortunes at the time, my late illness may be a blessing to me in so far that it will make me stronger and abler for my winter labours. I have not been well for a considerable time past, and this I believe will, with due care, make me stronger than I would otherwise

have been. . . . Kindest love to Helen, etc.—Yours ever affectionately, J. Y. Simpson."

The memoir on Leper-Houses was read before the Edinburgh Medico-Chirurgical Society, March 3d, 1841. It was afterwards extended and published in three parts in the *Medical and Surgical Journal* in 1841 and 1842. The care, time, and labour bestowed on it must have been very great, and the research immense. In the notes nearly five hundred references to authorities are given, many of these being to works of whose existence few even of well-read students are aware. Chartularies, printed and MS., Registers of old Religious Houses, Books of Monasteries, Annals of particular places, Records of Burghs and Town Councils, old Acts of Parliament, Records of Criminal Trials, Latin, English, Scotch, and French Histories, Accounts of Religious Orders, Royal Ordinances, Monkish Chronicles, Books of Antiquities, old Travels, and a multitude of other works in

"Thoughtful lore and studies sage,"

are drawn on for illustrative matter. In the appendix he gives a list of one hundred and nineteen leper-houses which he had traced in Britain, with their description, and the date of their foundation, or of the earliest notices of them. Few men had in a higher degree the faculty of finding all an author had to say, and few knew better to what sources to turn for information on any topic. During his student life he had ransacked departments of knowledge on which was gathered the dust of ages. And when he set himself to think out a subject, all that had ever been written on it seemed to come at once within reach. The mass in his hand became plastic, and yielded to his touch. The heat and radiance of his genius penetrated it, and the reader came to regard it, more as the property of the writer than of the author whose name it bore. Even quotations were seldom used by him like patches on a garment. They were, like bits of fine mosaic, harmonized by being used to bring out an exquisite figure, or to realize a rare pattern. The

following extracts indicate the character and scope of the memoir on Leprosy :—

"Few subjects in Pathology are more curious, and at the same time more obscure, than the changes which, in the course of ages, have taken place in the diseases incident either to the human race at large, or to particular divisions and communities of it. A great proportion of the maladies to which mankind are liable have, it is true, remained entirely unaltered in their character and consequences from the earliest periods of medical history down to the present day. Synocha, Gout, and Epilepsy, for instance, show the same symptoms and course now, as the writings of Hippocrates describe them to have presented to him upwards of two thousand years ago. . . .

"Since the first medical observations that are now extant on disease were made and recorded in Greece, various new species of human maladies have, there can be little doubt, made their original appearance. I need only allude to Smallpox, Measles, and Hooping-cough. Again, some diseases which prevailed formerly, seem to have now entirely disappeared from among the human race. . . . Other maladies, as that most anomalous affection the English sweating-sickness of the fifteenth century, have only once, and that for a very short period, been permitted to commit their ravages upon mankind. And lastly, we have still another and more extensive class, including maladies that have changed their geographical stations to such an extent as to have made inroads upon whole districts and regions of the world, where they were formerly unknown, leaving now untouched the localities which in older times suffered most severely from their visitations. Among this last tribe of diseases no one presents a more curious subject of inquiry than the European leprosy, or tubercular elephantiasis of the middle ages. This malady is now almost entirely, if not entirely, unknown as a native endemic disease on any part of the continent of Europe, and yet from the tenth to the sixteenth century it prevailed in nearly every district of it.

Laws were enacted by princes and courts to arrest its diffusion, the Pope issued Bulls with regard to the ecclesiastical separation and rights of the infected, a particular order of knighthood was instituted to watch over the sick, and leper hospitals or lazar-houses were everywhere instituted to receive the victims of the disease. . . .

"That an immense number of leper-houses existed on the Continent at the period mentioned is abundantly shown in many of the historical documents of that age. Louis VIII. promulgated a code of laws in 1226 for the regulation of the French leper hospitals; and these hospitals were at that date computed to amount, in the then limited kingdom of France, to not less than 2000 in number (*deux mille leproseries*). They afterwards, as is alleged by Velley, even increased in number, so much so, that there was scarcely a town or burgh in the country that was not provided with a leper hospital. In his history of the reign of Philip II., Mezeray uses the same language in regard to the prevalence of leprosy and leprous patients in France during the twelfth century. Muratori gives a nearly similar account of the extent of the disease during the middle ages in Italy; and the inhabitants of the kingdoms of Northern Europe equally became its unfortunate victims. . . .

"The Scottish lazar-houses that I have thus enumerated, though few in number, are still sufficient to show that the disease for which they were instituted was generally diffused over the extent of the kingdom. Thus we have found the establishments in question spread from Berwickshire to Shetland, and from Aberdeen to Ayr. . . .

"It is believed that the name of the village of Liberton (two miles south of Edinburgh) is merely a corruption of Liper town —liper being the old Scotch term for leprosy. . . This idea is certainly in no small degree countenanced by the circumstance that the lands of Upper Liberton (Libertune) in some old writs are described under the name of 'terrarum de Spittle town' (Hospital town). . . .

"This 'oily or balm well' of Liberton was sufficient to excite the admiration and engage the protective care of the credulous King James VI. In a curious monograph, on the virtues of the well, published at Edinburgh in 1664, the author, 'Mathew Mackaile, Chirurgo-Medicine,' indulges himself (p. 117) in an historical eulogium and anathema in regard to it.[1]

". . . In these early times, the very words employed to designate the disease show its extent and severity. Somner, Lye, and Bosworth, in their several dictionaries of the old Anglo-Saxon language, all quote the remarkable expression, '*seo mycle adl*,' 'the mickle ail,' or great disease, as signifying 'elephantiasis or leprosie;' and it is worthy of observation, in reference to the same point, that the delightful old French chronicler, Sir John Froissart, who visited Scotland in the time of Robert II., applies, as we shall afterwards see, the analogous term of 'la grosse maladie' to one noted case of leprosy in this country. . . .

"At the present day, tubercular leprosy is still regarded as a disease which sets at defiance all the powers of the medical art. Our ancestors had so firm a belief in the same doctrine, that in the case of one of the unfortunate wretches who was tried in Edinburgh in 1597 for witchcraft, amongst the gravest of the accusations brought against the panel was this, that she (Christian Livingstone) affirmit that she culd haile (cure) leprosie, 'quhilk' (the libel adds) 'the maist expert men in

[1] "His Majesty King James the Sixth, the first monarch of Great Britain, of blessed memory, had such a great estimation of this rare well, that when he returned from England, to visit this ancient kingdom of Scotland, in anno 1617, he went in person to see it, and ordered that it should be built with stones from the bottom to the top, and that a door and a pair of stairs should be made for it, that men might have the more easie access unto its bottom, for getting of the oyl. This Royal command being obeyed, the well was adorned and preserved, until the year 1650, when that execrable regicide and usurper, Oliver Cromwell, with his rebellious and sacrilegious accomplices, did invade this kingdom, and not only defaced such rare and ancient monuments of Nature's handwork, but also the synagogues of the God of Nature."

medicine are not abil to do.' Some of the means of cure she had employed have never, I am afraid, been allowed a place in any of our pharmacopœias. I may allude therefore, as a specimen, to one of them, amongst others, viz. (and I quote the words of the libel), 'she took a reid cock, slew it, baked a bannock (cake) with the blude of it, and gaf (gave) the samyn to the leper to eat.' . . .

". . . Most of the Scottish leper-houses were very poorly or not at all endowed. Their principal subsistence seems to have been derived from casual alms. Each of the doomed inmates of the hospitals was, like the leper-struck heroine of the old Scottish poet Henryson, by

'. . . cauld and hounger sair
Compellit to be ane rank beggair.'

The inmates of the Greenside or Edinburgh lazar-house were allowed four shillings Scotch (about fourpence sterling) per week, and for the remainder of their subsistence they were, according to the original rules of the institution, obliged to beg at the gate of their hospital. The leper-house at Aberdeen was supported from the public funds of the town. . . ."

When recovering from the attack of illness by which, for several weeks after the close of his first session, he was unfitted for his usual work, Dr. Simpson found himself in a controversy well fitted to test his mettle. It was alleged at the time that several of his colleagues opposed his election to the Chair, on the plea that he was not a person of culture—not a man of letters. "He may know Midwifery well enough," they said, "as many old women throughout the country do, but his knowledge of medical science and its literature is meagre." A movement was now originated by certain prominent members of the medical faculty, for the discontinuance of the Chair of General Pathology. Dr. Simpson saw his opportunity and used it with all the more heart, that he felt himself contending in the interests of general medical science, as well as in support of his own convictions on this particular case. Hard blows

were given and received. To suppress this Chair would, he believed, be injurious both to the University and to science itself. As science advances, the limits of its various branches are better seen and more sharply defined. Instead of grouping several related branches under one department with one Professor, there comes to be a desire for subdivision of branches and an increase of teachers. Such views, favoured originally by Cuvier and other distinguished men, were being realized on the Continent. This was Dr. Simpson's strong position. The discussion gave him an opportunity of showing, how wide and accurate a survey he had taken of the whole field of medical science. The controversy called forth all his powers. But he soon felt, that it was not so hard a thing as he had at first thought to cope even with such able opponents as Alison and Syme. His statement of the question, his appeals to the authority of many of the ablest men of the day, and to the usage of the medical schools in France and Germany, the philosophical breadth of view indicated in dealing with the merits, the skilful summing up and trenchant disposal of objections, all bore witness to his skill as a controversialist, his attainments as a man of science, and his wide literary culture. Having stated, at a conference of the Faculty, that the views expressed by him were not new, but had formed the burden of an introductory lecture in 1837, when assistant to Dr. Thomson, he was challenged to produce the lecture.

"At the late conference between the College Committee and Medical Faculty, strong doubts were expressed as to whether there exists any difference between disease as considered in the course of General Pathology, and as considered in the Courses of Practice of Physic and Surgery. I then placed myself (perhaps my colleagues may think with very little judgment) under the promise of publishing such parts of my Introductory Lecture as I might find written, for the purpose of pointing out the difference in question. I confess I have no great hopes of making the subject in this way very clear to the non-medical

gentlemen belonging to the College Committee. I publish the lecture, however, such as I find it in my secretary, with this difference only, that I have added illustrations from Geography and Natural History to elucidate the question. I have deprived the whole as much as possible of medical technicalities, and corrected the expressions where it was necessary to do so in consequence of the rapidity with which the lecture was originally composed, a few days only having intervened between the period at which I was appointed to deliver the General Pathology Lectures, and the actual commencement of my duties as interim Lecturer on that branch. . . .

"The term PATHOLOGY, in its widest signification, may be defined to be the sum of our knowledge relative to the deviations which occur in the state of Disease in the functions and structure of the different parts of the living economy. It comprehends within its range of investigation the intimate *nature* and *seats* of diseased actions, (PATHOGENY)—the consideration of the *morbific agencies*, physical, chemical, vital, and mental, by which these actions are directly or indirectly produced, (ETIOLOGY)—the *external phenomena* or *symptoms* to which they give rise, (SEMEIOTICS)—the diversified forms that they assume—the courses that they follow,—and the various *alterations in organic structure* with which they may stand connected, (MORBID ANATOMY).

"But these several classes of facts relative to the human economy in the states of disease, and conjointly forming the objects of study in the science of Pathology, may be contemplated under two different points of view. I shall endeavour briefly to illustrate these two views, as the distinction between them constitutes the distinction between General Pathology and the Practices of Physic and Surgery.

"In the first place, we may take one view of morbid phenomena, and consider them precisely as they present themselves in those natural combinations or groups of symptoms that constitute particular diseases or particular *species* of disease,

and to which specific names have been assigned, such as Apoplexy, Smallpox, Gout, Aneurism, Hernia, White Swelling, etc. etc. Apoplexy, with Smallpox, and each of the individual diseases now named, is characterized by a certain distinctive series of symptoms, which occur in a certain regular concourse and succession. The whole natural history of Apoplexy, and of other individual species of disease,—that is, the consideration of the internal morbid conditions of the economy on which they each depend,—of the causes by which they may be each produced,—of the characteristic symptoms and course which they each exhibit,—of the effects to which they each give rise,—and of the different methods of treatment which they each require; —the consideration, I say, of all these various points, when taken together and viewed in relation to single, specific, or individual diseases, constitutes the study of what has usually been termed in the German and Dutch Schools SPECIAL PATHOLOGY, the *Pathologie externe and interne* of the French, and the Principles and Practice of Physic and Surgery of the Medical Schools of this country.

"In the second place, however, we may take another, and, in many respects, a more important view of the phenomena of diseases. Apoplexy, Smallpox, and every other individual disease, is, as it were, a definite and individual *Compound* of a certain congeries of symptoms, causes, effects, etc. The Special Pathologist, as we have just seen, considers morbid actions in this light. But instead of looking upon Apoplexy and other diseases as isolated objects, each of them having a compound character, we may break down or *analyse* one and all of the maladies to which the human system is liable, into the different *Constituent Parts* or elements of which they are respectively composed, and afterwards re-arrange and group these parts or elements together so that, from the field of general disease, all identical and allied symptoms,—all identical and allied exciting causes,—morbid alterations, etc. etc., shall be carefully collected and classified together. Then will it be in our power

to consider every individual morbid phenomenon which diseases as a whole exhibit,—every individual morbid condition, functional or organic, to which the human economy is liable,—every morbid alteration of structure that may occur in its several parts,—and every morbific cause, whether external or internal, which may be capable of deranging it,—as so many separate and distinct objects of investigation;—and each one of them can be thus studied, not simply as seen in and belonging to one single disease, but as seen in and common to a greater or less series of the whole diseases of the economy.

"By considering in this second and analytical manner all the different individual external phenomena or symptoms of diseases, all the different morbid conditions of the human economy on which these symptoms depend, all the various changes which occur in its organic structure, and all the different individual morbific causes that may act upon that economy, as *each* forming a constituent part or element, *not* of one, but of a greater or less number of different specific diseases,—and by thus being enabled to trace the history and relation of each single symptom, each single cause, and each single effect of morbid deviation, throughout *all* the series of specific diseases with which it may stand connected,—medical men have been enabled to collect and establish a series of *general facts or principles*, which, by diminishing the number of *special* or *isolated facts*, that the mind might otherwise require to keep in remembrance, tend in a very great degree to facilitate and advance the study of Medicine as a science, and promote its application as a practical art. These general facts or principles relative to disease, when confirmed by observation, experience, and sound inductive reasoning, and arranged in a systematic form, constitute the principles of GENERAL PATHOLOGY. . . .

"The General Pathologist, however, directs his attention not so much to the connexion and classification of the various symptoms of the disease, as to the nature and causes of *each* of

the symptoms individually ; and each of them forms for him a separate and distinct object of inquiry. Thus he studies the several premonitory symptoms of the Headache, Drowsiness, etc.,—the Coma and Stertorous breathing which occur during the attack,—and the Palsy which is so often seen succeeding or accompanying it,—*not* in combination, but as so many individual morbid states, common to a greater or less number of *other* specific diseases ; and he considers the Pathological nature of each of these states, *not* in reference to its occurrence in Apoplexy alone, but in reference to its occurrence in all the diversified morbid conditions of the economy in which it may present itself ;—in other words, he treats of these symptoms all severally, under their respective general doctrines. Thus, to commence with the last on the list, he treats of the Palsy attendant upon Hæmorrhagic Apoplexy, when considering the general history and causes of Palsy as an individual symptom,—he directs his attention to the torpor of the cerebral functions accompanying it, when discussing the different varieties and pathological causes of Coma,—and so on in regard to the various other Symptoms observed in the disease. . . .

"Let us take another illustration from Zoology and Comparative Anatomy. The pure Zoologist studies any single individual animal, as a lion, an eagle, or a whale, in relation to its own individual distinctive characters,—its own peculiarities of external form and appearance,—its own peculiarities of internal structure,—its own habits and actions, etc. etc. The Comparative Anatomist, on the other hand, analyses each of these, and all other animals, into their component parts, and considers these component parts in relation to one another. In this way he is enabled to arrive at some general facts and principles which the simple Zoologist could never reach. Thus, for example, the Comparative Anatomist, in studying the brain as a constituent part of the structure of a large portion of the animal kingdom, has, by comparing the appearance and structure of this organ (the Brain) in a great number of different

animals, enabled us to acquire a knowledge of the mode of formation of the organ, of the relative importance of different parts of it, etc., that we could never otherwise have attained. By the same analytical plan, the Comparative Anatomist has enabled us to trace out the different *general types* of structure which the Heart, the Intestines, the Skeleton, the Skin, the Head, the Anterior Extremities, etc. etc., present in the animal kingdom at large; and upon the basis of this knowledge, the human Physiologist has in late years been enabled to draw a great number of most important generalizations with regard to the structure and functions of the corresponding parts in the human subject. . . .

"Now, to apply this illustration:—the Zoologist studies each individual animal singly and by itself, in the same way as the Special Pathologist studies each individual disease singly and by itself. Again, the Comparative Anatomist first analyses, and then re-arranges and classifies together, the constituent parts of individual animals, in order to draw out some general facts or laws with regard to the formation, structure, type, etc., of each of these single and more or less common constituents of the animal frame, in the same way as the General Pathologist first analyses, and then re-arranges and classifies together, the constituent parts of individual diseases, in order to draw out his general facts or laws with regard to the formation, etc., of each of these single and more or less common constituents of morbid action,—thus giving himself an opportunity of studying each individual pathological general fact or principle as one entire whole,—as one connected chain,—while the Special Pathologist has, from the different nature of his pursuits, to content himself with studying it in those broken and disjointed links in which it presents itself to him in the phenomena of individual species of diseases. . . ."

These general positions are fully illustrated by special cases. In tracing the subordinate divisions of his great theme, he shows how many and important services it is fitted to render the physician.

His friend Dr. John Reid was appointed, in 1841, to the Chair of Anatomy in the University of St. Andrews, and the Edinburgh men honoured him with their congratulations at a public dinner. Dr. Alison presided, and Dr. Simpson acted as croupier. In Reid's reply to the complimentary speeches of the evening, he referred to his past friendship with Simpson. "In the croupier I recognise my earliest friend, a native of the same village. We were rivals at school and at college. We were fellows in the playground. In short, we stood to each other from boyhood upwards in every possible relation, whether of an educational, warlike, delicate, or social character, which the warm and fitful feelings peculiar to boyhood and youth can produce. And now that the more staid sentiments of manhood have sobered the exuberance of youthful feeling without detracting from its sincerity or warmth, we both look back with feelings of unmingled pleasure to those scenes which memory luxuriates to recall, and over which imagination delights to ponder." Dr. Simpson's delight in these scenes increased with his years. When weary, depressed, and overworked, "a run to Bathgate" was as an excellent medicine.

Another year glided past, in which growing professional success and quiet domestic enjoyment mingled with much hard work and some trial.

"23*d December* 1841, 22 Albany Street.

"My dear Mr. Grindlay,—I have some paper before me to scribble two or three letters for the post, and take the liberty of sending one of the sheets to you.

"We are all well and hearty here. Maggie has just been before tea laughing and skirling at a great rate. She tries to walk by a hold, and appears to think herself mighty clever when she manages a few steps.

"My class has turned out better than I at one time expected. I believe I have the second largest among the medical faculty.

"I have been very busy in practice for several weeks past, and often wish the day were thirty hours long in order to get all

done that ought to be done. Yesterday I had the honour of waiting professionally on several 'Honourable' ladies—on three daughters of Lord ——, on Lady D., and in the evening on Lady A.

"I am using two horses, one for the day, and the other for the evening work. Maggie often sits and chuckles over her apple-pie book, and seems to admire most the part of 'G gobbled it."

"With kindest love to Mrs. G. and all in Bedford Street, believe me, your very affectionate son, J. Y. Simpson."

At the close of the year he had saved as much as he thought would carry him over all difficulties. "If I am allowed to keep my health next year," he wrote to Sandy, "I trust to be able to lay aside a still larger sum. I sometimes cannot help thinking of the great difference a few years have produced. Not long ago I was more proud of being asked to attend John Young's journeyman's wife than I have been this year in being called to attend a Countess." But with his wonted readiness to respond to every application for money, he sent his savings to a friend. Writing to his brother, he says:—"Mr. —— did not get the returns he expected to fill up his bank account against New Year's Day, and I sent him what I had accumulated in the last week of December, so as to leave myself quite bare. If you could therefore send me in £100 I should feel greatly obliged. I will be able to give it you again in March or April.

"I have got another money matter to look after. Dr. Hamilton's daughters last week sold the Hospital with all its furniture, beds, tea-cups, etc. etc. I had put in £30 of furniture myself, which I was obliged to buy back on Thursday last from Mr. Brown, the purchaser, with all the other things, to put into a new hospital. The Hospital is necessary for the class. We are ordered to flit to-morrow, and have not yet got a house. I expect to get the use of the Fever Hospital for a few weeks to put our poor patients in. I must exert myself for some months

to come to get a new hospital set a-going. 'A stout heart to a stey brae.'

"Let Mr. Fergusson put my name on the Lodge Society if it will do any good. I wished to run out at Christmas, but found it utterly impossible to steal away.

"Give my kindest compliments to Janet and family, with all the happiest wishes of this happy season.

"I hope you are pleased with the reading of Dr. Keith's books. They lead one onwards like novels.—Yours very affectionately, J. Y. Simpson."

"My dear Sandy,—I ought to have acknowledged ere this the receipt of your kind order for the £100. I shall now, I think, be able to clear all off the last fortnight, and get nearly £150 of fees.

"I had a letter from the Earl of M. yesterday, stating how greatly pleased he and the Countess were with my services, etc. etc.

"Great Church discussions here! Twenty-four of our Edinburgh clergy are to go out. I am half pleased that I am not sitting under one who does go. Dr. Muir remains. If otherwise, I would certainly have seceded too.

"I have wagered Mr. Angus that 400 ministers at least will leave their churches.

"You will see in yesterday's *Advertiser* (last page, first advertisement) an advertisement of mine for a house. I want to get farther west, if possible.

"I was out two miles into the country this afternoon seeing professionally a niece of the Marquis of Lothian.

"Hope all are well, and with kindest regards, believe me, yours ever affectionately, J. Y. Simpson."

The pleasure his success gave to his relatives brought him more gratification than the success itself did. His sister's joy was a source of deep content. To a note from Mrs. Simpson Mary answered :—

"*8th April* 1842.

"I am delighted with your description of your dear little Maggie. All that you write of James, *my* James (for I have both a mother's and a sister's love for him) is just what I expected. I knew he would be as kind a husband as a brother. It is with feelings of proud joy I hear of his unbounded success. Long, long may he be spared to be useful to others, and a joy to us all."

Another child, David James, was added to the family group, and he wrote to his father-in-law :—

"Jessie, Williamina, Maggie, and I are all fondly hoping that you will be down with us on Wednesday to witness the little stranger's christening. We think we could give you occupation here for a few days, and it would delight us all if you would only come. With the Glasgow Railway it is now a less tedious journey. Do come and join our merry-making. My brothers from Grangemouth and Bathgate are to be in.

"The little fellow thrives like a mushroom. Maggie has got a go-cart to-day, and seems perfectly amazed at her own performances in walking in it.

"I wish you very much to come down for other reasons. I have been looking at the outsides of several houses for flitting farther west, where my business is lying more and more. There are several in Charlotte Square, Queen Street, etc., and we would have a ramble through them all if you would only come down."

In compliance with a long-established custom, one of the medical faculty addresses the newly-made graduates at the close of their academical career. In 1842 this duty fell to Dr. Simpson, on which occasion eighty-seven candidates had conferred on them the degree of Doctor of Medicine. The address gives a clear indication of his views at that time of professional life and responsibility.

He said,—"I gladly avail myself of the combined privilege and duty which devolves upon me on the present occasion. And, in the first place, I would employ it for the purpose of congratulating you upon the honours you have this day obtained —honours the highest in Medicine which this or any other British University can confer. You have won these honours by an arduous and a prolonged course of study. For years past you have been accumulating the store of professional knowledge necessary for their purchase, by your labours in the class-room and in the closet, and by your study of disease by the bedside of sickness and suffering. To obtain the requisite knowledge many of you have perilled your own health, nor scrupled to breathe the poisoned breath of infection itself. And all of us could, with heartfelt regret, recount the names of some, who, commencing their studies along with you, might perhaps have been sharers in the joys and honours of this hour, had they not perished in their careers under the dangers to which the very nature of their calling exposed them—noble, but alas! young and early sacrifices at the shrine of professional duty. During the few moments, however, which we are yet to spend together, I would speak not of the past but of the future,—not in regard to what you have already accomplished and encountered as professional students, but of what still awaits you as professional practitioners,—not of the mode in which you have conducted yourselves *heretofore*, but of the mode in which you ought to conduct yourselves *hereafter*.

"First of all, there is one opinion of primary importance, because of primary danger (an opinion that I fear is only too common amongst you), against the spell of whose blighting influence I would warn and guard you with all the earnestness of the most heartfelt conviction. Many of you imagine that, with the present attainment of medical honours, all your medical learning and labours are at once to cease;—that with your diplomas in your possession, you may henceforth

banish all professional books and investigations from your thoughts ;—that you leave these walls, not practical tyros, but proficients in every kind of professional acquirements. No idea could be more groundless and unsound—no error could be more fatal to your future prospects and progress in life. This day is to be dated as the day of the true commencement, rather than of the true consummation of your professional studies and exertions. It is, at best, but a momentary halt after the first and easiest stage in the journey of professional life ; and your march onward must be one, not of diminished, but of redoubled energy and diligence.

"The medical practitioner should never cease to be the medical student. His whole course must be one of continued and accumulating instruction and research. The vast importance as well as the vast extent and rapid march of our profession demand it. . . .

"If there is therefore any single truth which you ought to engrave 'upon the table of your hearts' more deeply than another, it is this,—that if you aspire after professional distinction (and who amongst you does not?) *you must assiduously enrich and extend your store of professional knowledge by continued and constant observation, reflection, and reading.* Let no opportunities escape you of personally watching and studying for yourselves the diversified phenomena and results of morbid action and of remedies. And though you are henceforth to practise medicine as an art, and as a source of pecuniary emolument, still, I beseech you, continue to look upon, and love, and investigate every part of it with all the ardour and zeal of a science. Do not suppose (as has been often alleged) that the study of practical medicine as a department of scientific knowledge, is in any respect incompatible with the exercise of practical medicine as a department of professional gain It is totally the reverse. The more you know of disease—the more deeply and enthusiastically you study its phenomena—the greater will be the interest which you will take in every

ailment submitted to your charge, in every symptom of it, and in every change in it,—an interest certainly altogether independent of, and immeasurably above, the incentive of pecuniary reward, but one that is still in itself the surest ultimate road to that very result, because it is the surest means to bind you to your patients with all that zeal and all that devotion, that are so properly considered by the public as alone worthy of such reward.

"In struggling onwards towards fame and fortune in the practice of your art, *place from the first all your hopes of advancement upon the breadth and extent of your medical abilities alone.* . . . And let me strongly forewarn you against one frequent error. Young physicians often dream that by extending the circle of their private acquaintances they thus afford themselves the best chance of extending the circle of their private patients. In following out this chimerical view, much invaluable time is frequently lost, and, what is worse, habits of pleasure and indolence are often, with fatal effect, substituted for those habits of study and exertion that are above all price. No man will in any case of doubt or danger intrust to your professional care the guardianship of his own life, or of the life of those who are near and dear to his heart, merely because you happen to be on terms of intimacy with him. The self-interest of human nature forbids it. To have professional faith and confidence in you, he must respect you in your calling as a physician, and not merely in your character as a social friend and companion. The qualities for which he might esteem you in the latter capacity are often the very reverse of those which would induce him to confide in you in the former. The accomplishments which may render you acceptable in the drawing-room, are not always those that would make your visits longed for and valued in the chamber of sickness and sorrow. . . .

"*In entering upon the active duties of medical practitioners, form your earlier habits of business and study with anxious and watchful care.*

"Every man has the power of forming what habits he will. The same duties, however irksome in the first instance, when gone over resolutely and uninterruptedly day after day at the same time, are soon, by their mere periodic repetition, converted from tasks into fixed habits and sources of pleasure. Their non-performance at last will, like their very performance at first, become matter of pain and disquietude. . . .

"*Above all, teach yourselves carefully to save your time, and to methodize all your pursuits.*

"The two great commodities which the physician carries into the mart of the world to barter for the goods of life, are his professional knowledge or advice, and his time. I have urged upon you to enlarge the quantity and enrich the quality of the former; and in order to accomplish this great object, let me now solicit you to save and economize the latter. Let your time be a property of which you are truly avaricious, and of every item of it be able to render to yourself a proper reckoning. It is by carefully preserving, conjoining, and making diligent use of these broken and disjointed portions of it, which others thoughtlessly waste and destroy, that almost all the highest reputations in the medical profession have been formed.

"If any one amongst you will only assiduously save up every odd moment and otherwise lost item of it for the next twenty years, and properly use these gains, you will have snatched, from perhaps utter waste, time enough to work out for yourself almost any reasonable reputation that the emulous ambition of your heart may aspire after. You may thus have actually lived, at the age of thirty or forty, a life much longer than he who has already numbered his threescore years and ten. In one single particular, it has been calculated that the simple difference between rising at six and nine o'clock in the morning, for the space of forty years, is nearly equivalent to the addition of fifteen years to a man's life!

"He who has the proper covetousness of time in his heart,

will find out, during the remainder of the day, innumerable other opportunities of contributing to his own saving stock of it, by adding thereto many other moments and fragments which the world at large are profligately and recklessly casting away from them. . . .

"*Ever cautiously guard against either your mind or body being degraded into that most debasing of all slavery—the self-slavery of indolence.* Do not vainly flatter yourselves, as is too often done by the young members of our profession, that, in the chances of our calling, fortune may, while you still repose in drowsy sloth and idleness, search *you* out in order to lay her gifts at your feet. To obtain these gifts you must arise and actively pursue *her*. Industry and diligence are the only offerings on your part for which either fortune or fame will exchange with you the riches of their rewards. No certain advance to a high professional standing can be made, except it be purchased by the free expenditure of such coin and currency.

"If any of you ever come to speak of your expectations and prospects always withering under the evil eye of a luckless fate, be assured beforehand that you are only, in disguised terms, so far confessing to yourselves and to others your own apathy and misconduct. Misfortune and mismanagement are terms much more synonymous in reality than mankind in general will believe. In all our worldly pursuits, as in all our professional studies, we are liable to be conquered, more by our own supineness than by the difficulties of our undertakings—more by ourselves than by our subjects. You are each endowed with the proper elements of success, if you will only properly use them. If you labour honourably, diligently, and indefatigably in your calling, few or none of you will find cause for ultimate complaint. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' . . .

"*In starting on the journey of active life, plant before your mind's eye an exalted standard of professional excellence, as a*

high, and, it may be, distant landmark, which you predetermine to strain every nerve to reach. If you thus set an exalted mark before you, the very elevation of your aim will impart a corresponding elevation of tone and character to all your motives and actions. You may fail in entirely reaching the high goal before you, but the very effort to reach it will add to the vigour of your professional powers and reputation. You cannot all be Hunters and Bells, Cullens and Thomsons, Abercrombies and Alisons, but you may all be greater and more distinguished men than you otherwise would be, if you will hold their noble examples in view, and emulate their habits of indefatigable application and industry. And be not dismayed by apparent difficulties in the road to professional distinction. . . .

"Hitherto I have been calling upon you to enlarge and extend, by every means in your power, the sum of your professional knowledge, with a view to your own personal considerations and personal prospects. But there is another and a higher view under which I would beg to urge upon you the same considerations. You are to practise your profession now, not only under a sense of the duties which you owe to yourselves, but still more under a sense of the *higher and heavier duties which you owe to your patients.*

"When the medical man first settles down in practice, he, by the mere act of this settlement, enters into a kind of moral contract with those who are to become his patients. They, on their part, agree to intrust entirely to his professional care and keeping, property which, to them, is greater than the riches of Crœsus—their health, namely, and their lives. He, on his part, pledges to protect and preserve for them these inestimable gifts, by all the best directed means that medical science has devised. Though it may be argued that

'It is not writ so in the bond,'

yet the obligation is not the less real. The contract, though

silent, is not the less solemn. It is a grave and inviolable bond of duty and conscience on the part of the practitioner,—one of faith and confidence on the part of the patient. See to it, therefore, that you are always prepared to fulfil perfectly and promptly your portion of the conditions of this important and rigorous mutual contract. Whatever is, under its seal, communicated to you as a matter of professional confidence, must ever remain buried within your own breasts in all the silence and secrecy of the grave. Whenever called upon for your aid, you are bound by duty, law, and honour, to obey the summons. If busied and immersed in any engagement, then must that engagement be instantly broken, unless it be purely a professional one.

"I have spoken of the duties which you owe to yourselves, and the duties you owe to your patients. If the limits of the present address had permitted, I would fain now have added a few observations on your *duties to your medical brethren.* In no walk is the young physician more apt to err, than in attempting to follow out the mutual rules of ethics and etiquette observed among medical men. The error may be from pure ignorance, and not from intention, but the verdict is always severe. Let me only state that here, as in other circumstances of life, you will find the beautiful and golden rule of 'Do unto others as you would have others do unto you,' universally applicable. And let me counsel you, 'If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.' Never disparage the practice or the character of any one of your medical brethren;—never interfere in any way or on any account in the treatment of any patients except your own;—and whatever you do or say in the exercise and conduct of your calling, do it as if the eyes of the whole profession saw you,—speak it as if all their ears heard you.

"On this matter permit me to add one word more: ever guard against allowing feelings of professional invidiousness to instil their canker into your soul. The gifts and rewards of

the profession may be occasionally awarded by the public with injustice; but such adjudgment is certainly the exception and not the rule. If another happen to outstrip you in your professional course, let it rouse up within you, not a spirit of malicious envy, but a spirit of generous emulation;—let it lead not to feelings of repining and to relaxation in your efforts, but let it rather urge you onward with a stronger and more determined energy of action. Whatever ground you do gain, gain it by fair and open competition. Never allow the darker part of your nature to persuade you to the attempt of overtaking him who has distanced you in the race of life, by any unjust efforts to lame the character, and thus diminish the speed, of your adversary. And if such attempts are made by others upon you, have no dread of them,—if 'you are armed strong in honesty,'—if you have pursued—what every man who respects either his own honour, or the honour of his profession must always pursue—a line, namely, of irreproachable truth, and unbending rectitude of conduct. 'Be thou as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.' In as far, however, as regards your personal feelings, the self-knowledge of your own pure uprightness and integrity will always serve you as an impenetrable panoply—'*robur et aes triplex*'—against the most sharp and cunning shafts that others may choose to aim at you; the self-approval of your own conscience will be always to your own heart an infallible antidote against their poison; and, again, as far as regards your worldly interests, rest assured of this, that the world itself will seldom or never allow you to suffer from any unjust attacks uttered by the tongue of professional slander, or from any false detractions dictated by a mere spirit of 'crooked malice.' . . .

"The fetters of academic discipline are now, and for ever, to be struck from you. You are about to pass from the closet of the student into the busy and bustling scenes of active life. The great city of the world is already throwing open her gates to receive you. Through that city you must now pass,

'whether through its darkness or its splendour, its profligacy or its virtue, its misery or its happiness: and in it all the honours of time and of immortality are to be gained or to be lost.' The avenues to its temples of fame and happiness are as open to you now as they ever were to any of your predecessors. The approaches to them are, as heretofore, beset on either side by ten thousand temptations. Pursue earnestly and undeviatingly the direct course of Christian and professional duty, and then you need fear not. But tremble if you allow yourself to be drawn aside from it at any one point. Temptations that may at first lure you from your path with the 'gentle hand of a grace or a pleasure,' will, if yielded to, soon hold you with the iron grasp of a giant. Your future career is a matter of your own selection, and will be regulated by the conduct which you choose to follow. That career may be one of happiness or of self-regret; one of honour or of obscurity; one of wealth or of poverty. During it the present fond hopes of professional fame and fortune that breathe in the breasts of all of you may be won or lost, may be fulfilled or falsified, may be nobly realized or ignobly ruined."

The reader will observe how earnestly he exhorts the young physician to save and economize his time. The duty of saving the moments, and letting the minutes look after themselves, was a favourite subject when he was called to speak to students. But in his estimate, the quality of the work was the all-important element in life. Of a hard-working, thoughtful doctor who died young, he said:—"He was *older* than some of us that are twice his age!"

> "We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
> In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
> We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives
> Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.
> Life's but a means unto an end—that end,
> Beginning, mean, and end to all things—God!"

Ere 1842 had half run its course, Dr. Simpson felt himself freed from all those worldly distractions and painful feelings

which had beset his career for some years. Hitherto fame had shot far ahead of fortune; now they were going hand in hand, and increasing day by day. In the opening of 1843 he wrote to Alexander:—

"1*st Jany.* 1843, 10 *o'clock* P.M.

"My dear Sandy,—Jessie joins me again in wishing you all a happy, happy, happy New Year.

"The banks are shut to-day, or otherwise I would have enclosed an order in the box. I will send one to-morrow for £200, which, with the £100 I gave you when you were last in town, will relieve the promissory-note I gave you some years ago. If you have it, be so good as burn it.

"As a feeble, alas! too feeble, mark of the feelings of gratitude which David and I and all of us owe to you, I have sent, as a New-Year's offering to the kindest of brothers, a box with a few articles. In choosing these, Jessie has endeavoured to select those which she hopes Janet will find really useful.

"The whole is a small, small repayment of the boundless debt I owe you.

"I write in great haste to get the box off with the woman Heugh, and in the meantime remain ever most affectionately yours, J. Y. Simpson."

The Disruption of the Church of Scotland took place on May 18, 1843, an event which Dr. Simpson regarded with great interest, and which afterwards came to be associated in his mind with some highest forms of personal religious experience. More than a year before, he had offered to wager with Mr. Angus, merchant, Bathgate, that at least four hundred ministers would leave their livings, should the Government refuse the claims of the Church. His confidence in the honour of public men was not misplaced. They had pledged themselves to a definite course of action, and he believed they would be found sincere, honest, faithful, and true. The event showed that there was still in Scotland, as in the past, much of the stuff that martyrs are made of. Dr. Simpson had avowedly tried to keep clear of ecclesiastical discussions, and wished to be held neu-

tral. But he soon found this impossible. He could not continue indifferent to their bearings on the private rights of conscience, the rights and liberty of Christian congregations, the question of Church and State, national character, and political progress. He saw, too, that the men who were foremost in these discussions, and in defence of popular rights, were foremost also in all schemes of general philanthropy. The few exceptions, as Dr. Alison and one or two more, only made this the more apparent. It would be out of place here to enter into a history of the contendings which ended in the Disruption. But I may indicate the principle that underlay the movement, and found expression in the event in which the movement culminated—the more so because of the deep interest Dr. Simpson took in the matter. The principle referred to is well expressed in the resolution of the General Assembly of 1838:—"That the General Assembly of this Church, while they unqualifiedly acknowledge the exclusive jurisdiction of the Civil Courts in regard to civil rights and emoluments secured by law to the Church and the ministers thereof, and will ever give and inculcate implicit obedience to their decisions thereanent, do resolve, that as it is declared in the Confession of Faith of the National Established Church, that the Lord Jesus is King and Head of the Church, and hath therein appointed a government in the hands of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate, and that in all matters touching the doctrine, government, and discipline of the Church, her judicatories possess an exclusive jurisdiction, founded on the Word of God, 'which power ecclesiastical' (in the words of the Second Book of Discipline) 'flows from God and the Mediator, Jesus Christ, and is spiritual, not having a temporal head on earth, but only Christ, the only spiritual ruler and governor of His Kirk;' and they do further resolve, that the spiritual jurisdiction and supremacy, and sole headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, on which it depends, they will assert, and at all hazards defend, by the help and blessing of that great God who, in days of old, enabled their fathers, amid

manifold persecutions, to maintain a testimony even to death for Christ's kingdom and crown. And, finally, they will firmly enforce obedience to the same on all office-bearers and members of this Church, by the execution of her laws in the exercise of ecclesiastical authority wherewith they are invested."

The Courts of Law refused to look at the Church's claim to co-ordinate jurisdiction. They ordered Presbyteries to ordain men over congregations which refused to receive them. They interfered with the Church in her exercise of discipline, and generally, by a series of decisions, ruled that the Church as established by the State was under the control of the Courts of Law appointed by the State. An appeal was made to the Legislature against the unconstitutional interference of the Court of Session. But in vain. In the House of Commons, in a house of nearly three hundred and fifty, only seventy-six members recorded their votes in favour of the Church's claims. The Government of the day declared, that the claim of the Church of Scotland was so unjust and unreasonable that the sooner the House extinguished it the better. The Church saw only one way of escape from this thraldom, and she walked in that way. A majority of members of the Assembly of 1843 gave up all connexion with the State. The act, however, was not a secession. It was a disruption. Those who left State connexion carried with them the claim to be held the national, though disestablished, Church of Scotland! All Dr. Simpson's sympathies went with these men, and he became a Free Churchman, a step which, in the long-run, came to have important bearings both on his inner and higher life, and on his interest in Christian work.[1]

[1] A good deal of scepticism prevailed as to the event, and the numbers likely to come out. One eminent medical man vowed he would eat "all who should be the fools to give up their good livings in such a cause." The day after the Disruption a friend sent him a bag of salt, with the sarcastic message,—"If you are to be true to your vow, you will need to put the ministers in pickle!"

CHAPTER VII.

Increasing Success—Birth of his second Son—Death of Maggie—Mrs. Simpson to her Mother—Notes to Sandy—Aristocratic Circles—General Influence—Subject of many Prayers—52 Queen Street—Contrast—Men of Genius—The Philosopher's Stone—Controversy—Mental Qualities—Formidable as a Controversialist—Statistics of Amputations—Professor Syme—Stafford House—Engrossing Work—Charges of Neglect.

In the summer of 1843 he informed his brother, that his practice and fees were far exceeding his highest expectations. He added, "I am *very* busy just now. Jessie has a parcel of books to send to the youngsters. She is going to send you a portrait of my doctorship. I wish to give your Free Church library a help. Would books or money suit best?" In September of the same year his second son was born. "We expect you at the baptism," wrote Mrs. Simpson to her father. "Old Dr. Keith is to give him his name,—Walter Grindlay. Dr. George Keith left us on Saturday morning; he will be back for a day or two next week before setting out on his travels. We will all miss him very much." The next year opened brightly, but it was to be one of deep trial to them all.

"My dear Sandy,—I hope the box arrived safely last night. Did I tell you, in the hurry yesterday, that I had started my new carriage? It is a very handsome affair, and exceedingly comfortable inside—painted claret, with red lining, and *eight* windows in it. It appears light enough for my little horses, but may prove too much for them if hard pushed.

"My Royal patient keeps very well. She is a most unaffected, happy, laughing lassie, always pleased herself, and trying to please others also.

"The Marchioness of Breadalbane, the Countess of Lincoln, etc., are likewise located in the Palace under my professional care, and the old Palace is quite converted into an hospital. It looks very bright and cheerful when the court is lighted up at night.

"When are you to be in? I shall be tied here for two months with M., etc. etc. etc., or I would break off and show you my claret curricle.

"Any word of Dr. Dawson coming to town?

"I have been exceedingly fortunate in getting the Princess as a patient, because it quietly places me at the top of the *practice* on this side of the Tweed. She is the constant theme of talk in our Edinburgh circles at present, and crowds wait occasionally in the streets to see her.

"With kindest respects to Janet and family, believe me, yours ever most affectionately, J. Y. Simpson.

"2*d January* 1844."

Three months later he wrote—"Since 1st January I have received £1000 in fees, and expect soon some hundreds to add to this."

In the end of May death crept into the prosperous and happy household. Their pet, Maggie, was taken from them after a brief illness. To his sister-in-law at Bathgate he wrote:—

"My dear Janet,—My own dear Maggie was taken from me this morning between nine and ten o'clock. She was attacked with measles a fortnight ago, and was subsequently seized with a very bad form of sore throat, which, after several days' struggle, at last became worse on Friday night, and proved too strong and fierce for her little emaciated body. It was ultimately so heart-rending to witness her terrible anxiety

and restlessness, that her demise was almost a release to all of us. She asked for a 'drink of water' for her little parched and burning throat a very short time before she died, but then, and for hours before, was unable to swallow it.

"My dear Jessie has behaved herself well under the stunning blow, and is better than I could have hoped for. Though dreadfully broken down, she is submitting to our affliction with great fortitude. My dear Maggie's life has been a short one, and in these first hours of grief looks almost like a dream, but a dream that will, I hope, leave behind it fond, fond, fond recollections of her and of her brief sojourn with us here. As we look now at her white corpse, it seems strange and inexplicable that she does not breathe and move. To-morrow we will all, I fear, feel the change to be more a reality than we can at present. For her the change is one for a better and brighter and higher world than this.

"Kindest regards to Sandy, and may he and you be long, long spared from the agony of watching the death struggles and death anguish of any child of yours.—Believe me, my dear Janet, yours very affectionately, J. Y. Simpson.

"22 Albany St., Edinburgh, *Sunday evening.*"

TO MRS. GRINDLAY.

"My dear Mother,—Between nine and ten o'clock this morning our dear, dear little Maggie was taken from us. Oh! may her early demise be a blessed means to teach us all how to undergo, with all the necessary preparation, that great change through which she has passed. Perhaps in the all-wise dispensations of Providence, He who gave her unto us has thus early snatched her from our keeping, with the view of thus blessing us in our seeming hard affliction. Let us hope and pray that it may be so. Mina wrote you last night. About six in the evening she suddenly became so fearfully pale and faint that we were afraid that she was to be removed from us then. She

rallied again, however, and was betimes worse and better during the night, sometimes breathing and dozing pretty quietly, but ever and anon waking up and staring around with looks of terrible anxiety. Her bonnie large eyes looked larger than ever, and though often distressing to witness from the death-agony in them, still they lighted on one and all of us now and again with a placidness and beauty which it soothes and melts one's heart to remember, now when the whole scene of anguish is closed. She named her mamma not long before she died, and among her last words was a whispering cry for a drink of water, but long ere then her parched throat was for ever, alas! closed against it.

"Aunt Johnston had kindly sat up with us all night, and she and Mrs. Ross were with us when death at last came. I was called down-stairs a few moments before, but a hurried ringing at the bell brought me suddenly back to witness the last gasps.

"She is now stretched out on a little bed that Mrs. Ross gave her, in the parlour off the drawing-room. Her eyes are quite open, and she looks beautiful, but still as if suffering. As we look at her it seems most strange and inexplicable that she does not yet still breathe and move. . . .

"My own dear Jessie has behaved herself under this sad and stunning trial with—as she ever does—the greatest propriety and fortitude, but her mind is one which I fear will suffer longer and more deeply than many others. She teaches me resignation, and I am sure that now and always I could never have a better and more valuable wife.

"Poor Mina seems to-night utterly prostrated. She thinks probably you, and perhaps Mr. Grindlay also, will kindly pay us a visit just now. I am sure we would one and all of us be ever delighted to see you both with us—provided you will allow your other duties not to require you elsewhere.

"I have written a long, long note, absurdly so, but oh! I hope you will excuse it under the circumstances; for now that

our dear Maggie has left us, it is a source of pleasure of an indescribable kind to be thus allowed to talk of her, even on paper.

"With kindest love to Mr. Grindlay, Isabella, and Richard, believe me, my dear mother, your very affectionate son,

"J. Y. SIMPSON.

"*Sunday evening*, 22 ALBANY ST."

TO ALEXANDER.

"MY DEAR SANDY,—My dear Maggie is to be interred on Thursday at two o'clock. Jessie and I hope you will kindly come to us. I have bought a piece of ground in the new cemetery, in Inverleith Row, for mine and me.—Your ever affectionate brother, J. Y. S."

MRS. SIMPSON TO HER MOTHER.

"*Sunday evening.*

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—It was this day week that our darling Maggie was taken from my keeping into that of her Heavenly Father. To say that I do not feel her loss bitterly sometimes —'I miss her all day *everywhere*,'—would be belying myself; but I dare not repine, I know that the Lord doeth all things well, and though I know not now, I shall hereafter. Even now I can perceive many mercies in the dispensation, and I fervently trust we will find her death more blessed to us than even her life—sweet, sweet indeed though that was. Indeed, if it be possible for a mother to have a difference in her love, or a partiality, *I* had for Maggie. She was so sweet, so gentle, so reflective beyond her years, so sensitive; but now I see it all—I looked upon the gifts and forgot the Giver. Reasons upon reasons flow on me. My own passage to the tomb is so far smoothed. When I thought of death, *she* was the one I dreaded principally to leave; so shrinking, so delicate, I fancied she most needed a mother's love to shield her from the evils to come; but God has taken all care from me. He has secured my

dear one's happiness—*I have no doubt.* You know the Scripture promises. I look upon Davie and Walter now with trembling. Pray for me, my dear mother; I need help.

"Davie has come out amazingly since his illness—so intelligent and so affectionate, as if he had assumed part of Maggie's character as well as his own.

"Walter is a sweet merry child, more like Maggie in appearance and form than Davie, though much fairer than either. . . . Yours ever affectionately, JESSIE SIMPSON."

With chastened feelings, and longings after higher views of life and work, Dr. Simpson returned to the routine of daily duty. The child "who had gone before" had been very dear to him. Her death left a deep scar on his heart. Years after, when it might have been thought by most to be forgotten, even the incidental mention of the name she bore led him to describe her smiles and talk of her winning ways. He long continued to speak of her, as if he could still say,—

"Do what I may, go where I will,
Thou meet'st my sight;
There dost thou glide before me still—
A beam of light.
I feel thy breath upon my cheek,
I see thee smile, I hear thee speak!"

His work now lay chiefly in the department of the medical art to which he had devoted himself. But it is a mistake to suppose that it was confined to this. His general practice as a physician was extensive and important. In his special branch of practice he was already recognised as the leader. The report of his success as an accoucheur, and of his skill in the treatment of the diseases of women and children, was attracting to him the rich and noble in numbers that increased month by month. Worldly cares had ceased to trouble him. His letters to Sandy were still frequent, but shorter than before, though ever fresh, confiding, and full of heart. Details of money difficulties disappear, and are replaced by references to simple incidents in

the home circle—the children's ways and prattle, chance meetings with "Bathgate bairns," and memories of Maggie. As he knew it would much gratify his brother to learn his influence among the nobility, he kept him informed of his visits into circles that lay far away from that of the Bathgate household :—

"I expect Jessie and Davie home on Tuesday. Captain Petrie has got a free pardon from Sir James Graham.

"I was at Hamilton Palace last week seeing the Marchioness of Douglas. I have half promised to go to London to her in March. She pressed me to stay and have the honour of dining with the Duke of Cambridge. I preferred having the honour of *refusing,* as Forbes Angus was waiting for me. I have got an old chest of Cullen's drug drawers.

"In November I expect to bring into the world heirs to the Earldoms of W., R., and M. Of course I calculate on the three youngsters being all boys.[1] Probably I may make a run out for a day before the session begins. I all but agreed to make a visit to Lord and Lady Douglas at Brodick Castle, and try to shoot grouse !"

In these and many other cases there were not only the substantial rewards of liberal, in some instances princely, fees, but also fruits he valued as highly—the thanks and lasting friendship of the heads of many great houses. "I need not tell you," wrote the late Duke of Hamilton, when Marquis of Douglas, husband of the Princess Marie Amelia of Baden, "all I feel on this occasion, and I assure you I feel great pleasure in writing to you, as I can never forget your former kindness." In the same packets with similar notes from noble and distinguished persons, are many from widely different classes. To him they were equally gratifying. A Lammermoor shepherd hopes "the Lord will bless him and his for all his kindness to Jean." A

[1] Two of the hoped-for youngsters were boys. In the case of R., the son and heir came three years later.

shoemaker tells him—"Tammy's been another callant since you saw him; we thank God for such a doctor." A minister writes, enclosing a fee, which was returned—"To you, under God, I feel indebted that I have still her who is the light of my heart and hearth. We cease not to remember you in our prayers." Hundreds of such cases occurred, and, in the majority of them, there was the prayer for blessing on himself, his house, and his work. He would have been the last to think he had done anything deserving such deep thankfulness, but those on whom he waited, and the poor, the widow, and the fatherless, for whom his help was ever ready and free, would not have felt it unbecoming, had he taken up the words of one who in the olden time found some solace in the midst of overwhelming sorrow in remembering his work among men,—"When the ear heard me, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was a father to the poor, and the cause which I knew not, I searched out. And they waited for me as for the rain." No doubt at this period, and long after, he regarded these promises to pray for him as commonplace remarks, or like the "yours ever sincerely," of the subscription to a letter—mere expressions of courtesy. But, for the most part, they were much more. They were the heartfelt expressions of many who believe that God hears the prayers of all who come to Him through Christ. This was the influence which, unconsciously to himself, was, in ever deepening power, gathering round him, and was destined to bear the richest fruits.

While working with devotion and unceasing application in his own sphere, Professor Simpson had an eye for the whole field of professional effort. No paper of any value in medical literature escaped his notice. If the author was a country practitioner, he never failed to "look him up" the first

time he was in his neighbourhood. His friend Dr. Turner, of Keith, has communicated an instance of this. He says: "On returning from my professional rounds late in the evening of a cold stormy day about the end of 1844, I was informed that Professor Simpson of Edinburgh had called an hour or two before, on his way home from visiting a patient in a distant part of this country, and, not finding me in, had left word that he would be glad to see me at the 'Gordon Arms Hotel' here, where he was to stay for the night, intending to start early next morning by post-chaise to join the south train of the Scottish North-Eastern Railway at Aberdeen, for railway communication in the north did not then extend beyond the Granite City. I need scarcely say that I was not slow to avail myself of the opportunity thus offered, to make the personal acquaintance of one even then well and favourably known in the medical world by reputation. I found him seated alone at tea, and, the first greetings over, was little less surprised than gratified to hear him say, 'I remember your face very well. We attended Knox together in 1831-2.' The customary reserve of a meeting between strangers was forthwith at an end, giving place to what seemed more like a reunion of old friends. How it came that the recognition was not mutual, how that remarkable face and form, that 'head of Jove and body of Bacchus' (to quote Gerald Massey's quaint but happy description of his exterior), could have passed from my remembrance in the course of a dozen years, I cannot well understand. But such was the fact. Our student days were, so to speak, lived over again; the College, the Infirmary, and old Surgeons' Square supplying each its quota of pleasant memories. Isolated as I had in a great measure been, since beginning practice, from the men and things of the past, the after career of our Edinburgh coevals, teachers and taught, was little known to me; but Dr. Simpson's information on this head, both for its extent and its minuteness, was really amazing. Nor was the kindly interest he felt in all of whom he spoke, whether these had 'obtained the

prize,' or fallen behind in the professional race, less apparent. In short, his off-hand biographic sketches, with comments, were manifestly the outcome alike of a keen intellect and of a warm heart.

"The pleasure of this interview I owe to the publication, shortly before, of a paper of mine in Dr. (now Sir John Rose) Cormack's Medical Journal. Some of my observations had been tested and substantially confirmed by Professor Simpson, the details of his investigation having been given in a subsequent number of the same periodical, and the two communications afforded us a further theme of conversation. . . . In the course of our conversation, I could not help expressing my wonder that the duties of his Chair and of his large and daily-increasing practice left him so much leisure for reading and writing, for it was the characteristic of his frequent contributions to medical literature that their every page was loaded with references to authorities, ancient and modern, down to the latest on the subject in hand, references involving an amount of research seemingly possible only to 'lettered ease.' He replied that it was his habit to keep any subject that might be 'on the stocks' constantly in his mind's eye, and to employ, for thinking it out, reading up for it, or committing his ideas to writing, the smallest odds and ends of time left vacant in the midst of his daily or nightly labours. As an example of this literary husbandry, he mentioned that just then he had in preparation a paper which he was to read on the evening following to the Edinburgh Medico-Chirurgical Society, and which he had been dictating the few previous mornings, while dressing, to an assistant who wrote short-hand. Of that communication to the Society I cannot with propriety speak in other than general terms, as my reminiscences are intended for the eye of the general reader, but the facts and arguments advanced in it, now familiar to the profession, have revolutionized our practice in an important, and by no means rare emergency. His manner in explaining his views, the ingenuity

and happy readiness of resource with which he aided the demonstration by means of a plate and a biscuit lying on the table before him, are fresh in my memory as the occurrences of yesterday."

Before Dr. Simpson removed from Albany Street, the popularity and the usefulness indicated by such communications as those given above had fully set in. He soon found his house too small for the number of patients that now waited on him, and inconvenient for his general practice. He wished to remove farther west. In February 1845 he informed Mr. Grindlay that he had "purchased a house this morning in Queen Street. It lies between Castle Street and Frederick Street, has a fine public garden before it, and a small one with stable and coach-house behind. It has four more rooms for beds than our present one, and is a storey higher. It is not fashionably done up, but looks a good comfortable place. The kitchen flat will need some repairs and alterations. I only heard of it forty-eight hours ago, and had no intention of moving this year. The price is £2150. The feu-duty is about three pounds yearly. It is probably the most central part in the town, and so far favourable. Nor is the price of property likely to decrease there. In fact, it is rising higher and higher in Edinburgh. The dining-room flat contains two back rooms; there are two drawing-rooms and a bedroom in the second flat; four bedrooms in the third (one of them very large, and an excellent nursery), and four also, but smaller, on the fourth flat. The money is to be paid at Whitsunday. I will have no difficulty in getting my own house let.

"We are all well. Excuse haste, and believe me, my dear Sir, your very affectionate son, J. Y. Simpson."

This house was afterwards greatly enlarged. All the past was brought vividly before him when he entered his new dwelling. It was a great contrast to the home of his boyhood and youth—a house of four rooms, one of which answered as

kitchen, parlour, bedroom and shop.[1] Not unfrequently he dwelt on the success implied in the contrast.

It is evident from Dr. Simpson's correspondence, that not a few artists and men of letters were greatly obliged by his kind, often unsolicited, and ready help and encouragement, at times when they greatly needed some man of influence to take an interest in their work. A note from a friend, or the sight of what they were working at, at once secured a welcome, kind and cordial as if they had long been fast friends. In some cases this had its disadvantages. The mode in which they were received, the deferential bearing which he ever held to men of genius or of talent, and the cheerful, sparkling conversation at the breakfast-table or at lunch, beguiled more than one to trust him with details of their life and present condition, studiously concealed from older and more intimate acquaintances. When he saw pecuniary help was needed, it was freely offered. In some instances it had better, perhaps, been withheld. In others, it was of the greatest use. He tried to be judicious and discriminating, calling his gift a loan, and advising steady application to every-day commonplace remunerative work. But some of his acquaintances were dreamers whom help enabled to go on dreaming, instead of doing with their might the work that lay to their hand. They took all they got, and "asked for more." Yet men of this stamp found a ready way to his sympathy and his purse. Other even less shrewd men would soon have discovered that the genius in such cases was only—

"God's glimmer that comes through the ruin top,"

—not likely to shed much radiance on the darkness outside. It is difficult to account for the interest he took in men of this kind, or for the patience with which he continued to listen to their schemes, and their complaints of the want of sympathy with which the world in general regarded them. An example

[1] After Dr. Simpson's death, Alexander bought the house in which he was born, removed the partition that divided the upper rooms, and furnished the place as a hall for religious services. He believed this would have greatly gratified his brother.

may be given. A friend introduced an acquaintance as "a man of great literary attainments, and a writer in some leading journals." A good deal of intercourse followed, and substantial help was given, even in the knowledge that the man was in search of the philosopher's stone!—"a solid substance," he wrote, "which, combined with lead, or tin, or some other metal, would form gold." Protesting that he cared little for "the base metal," he was, he said, spending "his days and nights in the laboratory to discover the art of making it by compounds of metals baser still." Yet in his communications there are evidences of literary power, and a good general knowledge of some of the most recondite speculations of the ancient physicists and of the alchymists of the middle ages:—

"My dear Sir,—Would you have the goodness to add your valuable and much desired testimony to that of Sir William Hamilton (as per certified copy enclosed), that, from my devotion to science, and my profession as a literary man, I am entitled, while labouring under pecuniary difficulties, arising from the uncertainties of my profession, and not from immoral character or habits, to derive some benefit from the Literary Fund at London for behoof of persons placed unfortunately in such a position as I have occupied for the last two years? That I am still in the class of the unfortunate I regret to say, more particularly to *you*; but to this vexatious subject it is useless at present to allude further. . . . I have, almost ever since I had last the pleasure of corresponding with you, been employing my time to the best possible advantage in the preparation of a work of some interest and importance, but, unfortunately, even that slender resource has of late utterly failed me, and, like many a literary brother as good as I am, I have been breakfasting on a waistcoat, dining on a shirt, and supping on a pair of tough old leather boots, so that I am forthwith under the dire necessity of applying to the Literary Fund, provided for behoof of poor unfortunate devils such as I am. . . . I cannot refrain from occupying a little more of your valuable

time in more particularly alluding to the subject of the work, if such it can be yet called, being not yet put into shape and form, on which I have been *so* intently engaged for at least sixteen or eighteen months, that the razor has not crossed my chin above half-a-dozen times till now. Well, then, having accidentally discovered that oxygen and other of the more recondite elements of nature, commonly, but now it appears erroneously, supposed to have been discovered only in comparatively modern times, were, in fact, *perfectly well known to the ancient chymists or alchymists,* at least to the more highly-initiated amongst them in their enigmatical way of treating of the sciences, I soon found that this fact affords *a key* to much that is obscure in their writings, and that, indeed, it opens up the way to a curious and interesting, as well as important, chapter in the history of ancient science—that it affords materials, in short, for a curious and interesting treatise on the ancient history and practice of chymistry, comprehending much matter of a *novel* and startling description, as, you will no doubt anticipate, cannot but be the case, if such elements as oxygen, hydrogen, etc., were in reality well known to the highly-initiated alchymist, and I have no doubt I shall clearly prove this to have been the case. And not only so, but it is evident, as this key to obscurities has clearly pointed out, that these ancient chymists possessed a most delicate and comprehensive knowledge of chemical affinities, and were acquainted with a law of chemical union, relative to metals, of which modern chymists are entirely ignorant, but which manifests itself in a wide and glaring *hiatus* in the *known* laws of the union of *solids with solids,* a subject admittedly still involved in certain points, in much obscurity. The law to which I allude is one *so obvious* in its nature, as a likely law of chemical union, that it is only astonishing it should have escaped the acute observation of modern chymists. And it must have been discovered long ere now had they not been lured aside by other interesting and comprehensive laws with which they have

preoccupied their field of speculative and practical observation. Whether Dr. Samuel Brown has at length obtained a glimpse of the law alluded to I do not know, but I think it is possible from the peculiar bent of his practical pursuits."

In another:—

"My dear Sir,—After having already so severely tested your kindness in other respects, although, so far as regards my present poverty itself, I am not only not ashamed of it, but were it not that it still disables me from standing clear in my accounts with all the world (I had almost merely said, *with you*, for you have yourself alone been to me almost 'all the world' in this respect), I would otherwise glory in my difficulties, without the least compunction, as a sacrifice of heart and soul and body to science; and no enlightened lover of science such as you, I am assured, can feel the slightest diminishment, but, on the contrary, feel compelled to entertain an increase of respect and sympathy for any one whose poverty or temporary embarrassments have arisen from the devotion of his life to science, and his contempt for a mere life of slavish devotion to mammon.

"I am convinced that the occasion of your silence must either be absence *from* home, or hurried and constant occupation *at* home, which, however humiliating it may be to think so, must have driven all recollection of this matter out of your head. Intentional, I am perfectly satisfied, it cannot be; nevertheless my position in consequence for the last fortnight has not been the less painful; but I will not trouble you by further allusion to that, for I daresay, notwithstanding it may appear otherwise, you have quite enough to trouble your mind; and the knowledge of such probabilities renders me all the less discontented with my own lot, especially since I derive happiness, nay, delight, in the pursuit of my studies, far excelling in intensity anything which I ever experienced, or ever expect to experience, in the mere possession and expenditure of money. Could I

only pay the two or three debts I owe, I should go on in my own way, and with such humble work as that which lately ministered oil enough to the lamp of life, without the slightest spark of envy, or anything but entire indifference to all that money could procure (unless it were books, though even these I could dispense with), for, in the lowest depths of physical want—I cannot call that misery in which there is excitement and delight so vivid, so intense, in such circumstances, as you know, much more often than in halls of worldly grandeur, riches, and comfort, have the noblest and most valuable of discoveries, and the most highly-honoured and noblest of men shone out upon the world."

Again :—

"My dear Sir,—I am utterly at a loss what to say to you in return for your surpassing goodness of heart to one so little deserving of it as I am. Much hesitation and delay I could not help incurring ere I could resolve on applying to you *at all* for *such* a testimonial as I required, just because I *feared* the result, and felt that I was not in a situation wherein it was possible for me so to act as to prove to you my consciousness that you had already done far more for me than I ought to have permitted you to do, and my determination to resist a further increase of the deep debt, both moral and pecuniary, which I already owed you. Yet I cannot but confess the heart-felt thankfulness with which I accepted a loan, which I had resolved that nothing but the most dire extremity should impel me to receive. . . .

"As to your position, I really think you are not to be envied. No one, so *indefatigable* a lover and labourer in science as you have been, is at all to be envied in the endurance of a life of turmoil which those very labours and that very love have ultimately rendered it a duty to science and society themselves to submit to; but I hope the time will soon arrive when you will have it in your power to throw off much of that murderous

exertion which I know myself, and have been told by those who ought to know, that you have gone through in time past. . . .

"I am delighted to know that I have been anticipated in my own idea, derived from facts of my own discovery, that *all* chemical discoveries are only *re-discoveries*. Yes, depend upon it, my dear sir, that not only is such the fact as regards all past discoveries, but all discoveries still in embryo. We know that Sir Humphry Davy, who was so much of a *sceptic* as to say that sooner than London would be lighted with gas St. Paul's would be seen to dance a minuet with Westminster Abbey, that even he admitted the probability that gold is a combination, and that it might yet be discovered how to produce that combination artificially. . . ."

The correspondence continued throughout 1845, but it does not appear that, after all his experiments, a substance was obtained, which, being afterwards combined with tin or lead, produced gold sufficient to repay the loan!

There had been for a considerable time a lull in controversy. Dr. Simpson had been able, without distraction, to give continuous devotion to practice and to the work of his class. He had written a good deal, and done a vast amount of daily work, without crossing the paths of professional rivals, or demanding from practitioners attention to any new methods of treatment. But the lull was of brief duration. In the beginning of 1845, he had been called to vindicate his claim to priority in the suggestion and adoption of improved modes of treatment in certain delicate forms of disease.[1] In the summer of the same year he had to ward off attacks made, he believed, with deliberate intention, on his skill as a physician and his character as a gentleman. In both cases he had the sympathy of many of the most eminent professional men, some of whom not only hastened to congratulate him on the attitude he assumed, but freely to express their opinions of his antagonists. "There

[1] See *Provincial Medical Journal*, 1845. Controversy with Dr. Radford.

are, and ever will be," writes one, "some of our profession, who by their conduct are most deservedly entitled 'the medical non-contents.' Their principal work seems to be to carp at and cavil with every one who goes one step beyond themselves; and such is their abhorrence of everything beyond their own mean position, that whoever dares utter the word improvement is sure to be immolated at the shrine of their envy or malice." Others followed in the same strong and pungent manner, several of them, alas! in terms that violated those laws of charity and gentlemanly bearing whose breach they condemned in others. "There would be no great ones, if there were no little ones."

Dr. Simpson's mental qualities and habits of study made him a formidable opponent. "Keen to perceive the truth, he was equally vigorous in his announcement of it, and cared little to what cherished opinion his statements might run counter. Hence came contests where little quarter was given or received. He was a dangerous antagonist to meet at a joust, and though he could use the keen edge of steel, he oftener despatched his antagonist with a heavy mace of facts or figures, which those who had neither his industry nor his powers of memory could neither refute nor set aside. Hence he made many enemies, for he had run counter to many prejudices, and the old spirit which had opposed his election to the professorial Chair cropped out ever and anon, showing that it was smothered, not extinguished."[1]

From the time he attended the surgical classes, he had been much impressed by the great number of deaths that followed important amputations. He believed this to be far in excess of what might have been expected, when the nature of the operation and the skill of the operator were taken fully into account. Even in 1845, the views to which he afterwards gave ripe expression in his tracts on Hospitalism were much in his mind. They were, indeed, only one aspect of his long-cherished

[1] *Scotsman*, May 9, 1870.

desire after more potent means than were then employed, for the preservation of health and the diminution of the death-rate in cities and populous districts. This desire was now strongly influencing him, and he resolved to bring his professional brethren over to his views. The first step towards this was to obtain statistics of death after amputation, in hospital, and in town and country private practice. In the search for statistics, and the use he made of them, he trampled on many sensitive toes. The department of surgery, it was held, was one he had no right to interfere with. It was beyond his sphere. He knew nothing about it. Let the cobbler keep to his last. These, and like expressions, met him on all hands. Inferences he never dreamt of were drawn from his endeavours. Hospital surgeons concluded, that he wished to charge them with results for which he would have been the last to hold them responsible. The professional atmosphere became charged with electricity. The slightest offence given, often from want of thought, caused an explosion. Any want of courtesy, shown unintentionally, to men distinguished in his special branch of practice, speedily assumed most exaggerated importance. Though keenly alive to this state of matters, and regretting it, he held calmly on in the way he had chosen. His views of the value of human life, and his deep sympathy with human suffering, kept him steadily working towards the end he had in view. But his progress was often hindered. There were few among the older practitioners, or even among the men of his own standing, who were willing to move as rapidly as he. He had to walk slowly, to remove prejudices, to confront adversaries ready to do battle for old methods of working, or rather, perhaps, for their own old methods, and he had to bear to have his motives misunderstood and his acts misrepresented. The public health was more to him than his own comfort, and the interests of humanity more than personal vindication. He did, no doubt, occasionally deal rather roughly with any adversaries that dared to face him in the race, and he was apt to thrust them out

of his way without giving much heed to the manner of doing it. But he refused to hold himself responsible for the irritation, angry feelings, and petty personalities that so often outcropped. All the dust raised was never permitted to hide the high ends for which he worked—the alleviation of suffering and the preservation of lives to the domestic circle and to the State. Whatever tended to this was not, he held, the interest and work of any one class, but of every philanthropist.

It would not profit much to enter particularly into the controversy to which his statistics of surgery gave rise. He had the sympathy and the intelligent approbation of almost all the rising young men of his profession, and the thanks of several of his distinguished fellow-workers. Dr. Reid wrote—

"My dear Simpson,—Have you heard that I am a papa? Mrs. R. and little daughter are doing remarkably well. The jackdaws continue to manifest their former contempt for science. . . .

"I think you can *flummus* the surgeons capitally if they set up the line of defence you mention. I have put down on a slip of paper accompanying this the result of amputations of the thigh in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, furnished by the Statistical Tables drawn up by Peacock and myself, and you will perceive that the cures, instead of being 1 in 3, are far below this. If they argue that hospital practice is not a fair criticism of the success of amputations, and that private practice furnishes different results, then it may be replied, that if in their opinion the average mortality of 1 in 3 in any particular operation renders that operation illegitimate, amputation of the thigh in a public hospital is an illegitimate operation. Even excluding the cases of primary amputation, the success in secondary amputations, according to the tables referred to, is a little below 1 in 3.

"My Statistical Tables are printed in *Cormack's Journal* for August 1842. Peacock's Tables were not reprinted in any of the periodicals, as far as I am aware. . . ."

Dr. Sharpey wrote :—

"London, 23*d Oct.*

"My dear Simpson,—Many thanks for your shelling out of ——, though after you have cracked what most people think was *cracked* before, you only show he is a deaf or a rotten nut after all. He is a perfect nuisance in the scientific world, and it is high time such a nuisance were abated. . . .

"The Council of the Royal Society, at their meeting yesterday, awarded to Mr. Beck the Royal Medal for his communication on the Nerves of the Uterus, which, with the figures, will be published in due course in the Transactions.

"This is making the bitter cup run over. No doubt the award of the Society is the result of a conspiracy to mortify ——. . . . Quain met a highly intelligent physician the other day (who is also well known to the public as a man of science), and this gentleman had read your controversy, and pronounced —— to be fairly dished as to reputation.—Yours very truly, W. Sharpey.

"Pray write."

It was at one time my intention to do no more than mention the early want of cordiality between Professor Simpson and his eminent colleague, Professor Syme. But it once and again obtained such publicity, and has such a prominent place assigned to it, both in the medical journals and the newspapers, that it demands special notice. It is, moreover, instructive to trace it to its source.

For some time the personal irritation and bitterness that mingled in the contest for the Professorship appeared to be falling out of sight. Dr. Simpson and the colleagues who had opposed him were apparently working in harmony for the interests of the University. But the breach was not healed. There was a morbid touchiness about both parties, which led them to take offence on the slightest cause—a readiness, indeed, to find occasion for fault unworthy of all concerned. The notes from Sir Charles Bell and Professor Syme, published by Dr. Kennedy

with his testimonials, surprised and annoyed Dr. Simpson. They revealed a bias, a strong feeling of partisanship, and a prejudice that unfitted them to look at the intrinsic merits of his claim. The former had tried to cast suspicion on his testimonials, by referring to many of them as given by "good-natured people, merely to do a civil thing to a friend,"—a style of remark both unkind and unfair. And Mr. Syme had expressed his opinion in that curt, stinging style which he could ever so easily and deftly employ against an adversary :—"Having been requested by the friends of Dr. Kennedy to express my opinion of his qualifications for the Chair of Midwifery, now vacant in the University, I feel no hesitation in stating, that of the candidates at present in the field, he is out of all question, according to my judgment, the one that ought to be elected. JAMES SYME." Here was the well of bitterness. The "*out of all question,*" savoured so much of studied, deliberate contempt, that it would have been hard for any man—hard even for a truly Christian man—to forget or forgive, however high might be his opinion of his own attainments, or however deeply convinced of the unworthiness of this mode of opposition. But it should be remembered that Dr. Simpson was not the first to show that the Professorial contest was not forgotten. During the discussion on the expediency of continuing the Chair of Pathology, Mr. Syme had characterized facts stated by his colleague on good authority, as "matters of fact in an extraordinary degree inaccurate." This mode of statement had been met by Dr. Simpson in a quiet and gentlemanly way. But he had since meddled more than once with surgery, and this was not to be borne. And Mr. Syme soon had an opportunity to show his *animus.* In a professional paper published in the *London and Edinburgh Medical Journal,* July 1845, under Case third, reference is made to a physician-accoucheur, in terms far from complimentary, and fitted to damage the reputation and detract from the skill of any man. After describing the case, which was one of great interest to professional men, and re-

flected the highest credit on the skill of Mr. Syme as an operator, he goes out of his way to have another hit at physician-accoucheurs. "If these gentlemen," he says, "directed their attention to the principles and practice of surgery in general, there might be some propriety" (in confiding the treatment of such cases to them), "but, as by education and profession they are usually physicians, and in their practice abstain from treating surgical ailments or performing surgical operations, it does seem surprising that in a region where the difficulties of diagnosis are so great, and the execution of operative manipulation is beset with so many obstacles, that they should venture upon the management of purely surgical details." And much more in the same style. The conductor of the Journal, Dr., now Sir John Rose Cormack,[1] who was on terms of intimacy with Dr. Simpson, and with whom, indeed, the commencement of the Journal was planned, gave him early notice that an attack on him by Mr. Syme was to appear in the next Number. A bitter controversy ensued, which, as is so often the case in such disputes, came ultimately to turn on a point of feeble interest to any one. "Did Dr. Simpson say that Dr. Cormack had been told by Mr. Syme that he had him in view in his remarks, or was this only Dr. Cormack's own inference?" The result of all this was to widen the breach between those eminent men —a result which all interested in medical science must have greatly deplored.

TO DR. BEILBY, PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, EDINBURGH.

"My dear Sir,—As Mr. Syme has thought fit to address to you a second printed letter, I hope you will excuse my troubling you with some remarks in reply.

"*First,* Allow me to direct your particular attention to the subjoined note from Dr. Robertson. His correlative evidence appears to me to be of special value in the present instance, as

[1] Of Paris.

he was the first person to whom I communicated the details of my meeting with Mr. Syme,—and that within five minutes after the meeting itself occurred, and when everything was still recent and fresh in the memory. Dr. Robertson's remarks fully illustrate what I formerly stated, that Mr. Syme has given a disingenuous and untrue statement of almost every minor detail in his first letter to you. In his second letter, Mr. Syme reverts to one of these minor details, and to *one* only, and he evidently attaches, in his own mind, some importance to it. But *ex uno disce omnes.* Speaking of the place where we met, in the house of the patient to whom we both happened to be called, Mr. Syme states, 'he (Dr. Simpson) admits having intercepted me at the chamber door of the patient.' Now Mr. Syme knows perfectly well I never did in any way admit of any such thing,—and further, that, on his part, both the allegation of such admission is a deliberate misstatement to you, and the circumstance averred to be admitted is in itself incorrect. For when we met, Mr. Syme had not in truth 'nearly reached' the patient's bedroom door (as he avows to you in his first letter),—and far less was he actually 'at' it (as he next inadvertently asserts in his second). Neither statement is perfectly consistent with fact, while each so far contradicts the other. Trifles, such as these, may perhaps, and properly, be considered by you of little moment, but when exaggerated and misrepresented, they serve, in hands like Mr. Syme's, to give a false colouring to a simple story; and they may serve also, as in this instance, by the slight but palpable contradictions they display, to expose the dishonesty of those that use them, when it is impossible, from the nature of the case, to adduce more direct and express evidence of that dishonesty.

"*Secondly,* In my former letter, I mentioned that, unfortunately for himself, Mr. Syme had ventured to hazard one assertion on a point which admitted of more than mere personal evidence. I refer to Mr. Syme's affirmation that *Dr. Cormack had 'never'* told me that any part of his (Mr. Syme's) paper

was an attack upon me. I adduced Dr. Cormack's own evidence to prove that *Dr. Cormack had* told me so. Instead of apologizing for having been thus led to make to you and to the College a statement that was not true, Mr. Syme attempts, with Dr. Cormack's assistance, to back out of the difficulty, by anxiously mixing up the truth or fallacy of his assertion with a SECOND and totally irrelevant question, viz., whether Mr. Syme did or did not state to Dr. Cormack, that his forthcoming paper contained an attack upon me. I am not aware that any one ever affirmed that such a statement had been made by Mr. Syme to Dr. Cormack. I never did. And the matter in dispute was one totally different, and far more simple. It had no reference of any kind or in any way to *what Mr. Syme had or had not said to Dr. Cormack on the subject.* It had reference solely and entirely *to what Dr. Cormack had or had not, on his own authority and opinion, said to Dr. Simpson in regard to it.* Dr. Cormack stated to me (and I took it and repeated it entirely on his own authority and opinion) that Mr. Syme's forthcoming paper contained an attack upon me. Mr. Syme simply and flatly denied to you that Dr. Cormack *had* ever made any such remark to me. This is the sole and only point of his charge against me on this count in his first letter to you.[1] Dr. Cormack's published letters to me and to Mr. Syme, prove that, like some of Mr. Syme's other assertions, this one had no foundation in truth. I regret deeply to be obliged to add one remark more. I believe Mr. Syme knew the charge, as far as I was concerned, to be quite false, at the time that he printed and circulated, among the Fellows of the College of Physicians, the letter containing it. That letter was printed on the 23d. Two or three days previously, as is unhappily admitted by Dr. Cormack (see the last note in his published circular to you), Mr. Syme had seen and had read in manuscript, Dr. Cormack's

[1] "'It may be proper to add, that, immediately after this occurrence, I called upon Dr. Cormack, to inquire if he had told the Professor of Midwifery, that any passage of my Paper had been written against him, and was assured by that gentleman that he had never done so.' [See Mr. Syme's first Letter]

letter of the 5th, in which Dr. Cormack explicitly admits that he had told me of the attack he was to publish from Mr. Syme's pen, as being in his (Dr. Cormack's) opinion an attack upon me.

"*Thirdly*, Mr. Syme states to you—'I deny having acted or expressed myself unbecomingly towards Dr. Simpson, in regard to a patient.' Mr. Syme may possibly (?) think that he did not act or express himself unbecomingly in the case I refer to; but assuredly no other member of the profession could entertain the same opinion of the same behaviour. We both spoke of each other's conduct in the houses of patients,—and so far were both wrong. In the house of a patient to whom I called Mr. Syme (she was at the time residing next door to him),—he denounced my conduct as improper and unprofessional. In the house of the next patient, to whom we were both called, and where the interview so often alluded to occurred, I denounced in my turn his conduct as improper and unprofessional. But there was this difference.—Mr. Syme took an opportunity of speaking of me disparagingly when my back was turned; I spoke of him disparagingly when he and I met face to face. He spoke against me openly to my patient's husband and friends; I spoke against Mr. Syme to Mr. Syme himself privately, and when there was no third person present to overhear us.

"Pray, which of the two pursued the more 'unwarrantable' and 'unpardonable' conduct?

"Mr. Syme hints that, during the 'six weeks that elapsed between these dates,' I ought to have sought an explanation from him. I believed it quite unnecessary, as his conduct appeared to me to be beyond any possibility of explanation; but I simply resolved, in consequence,—as I stated to more than one medical friend at the time,—to avoid Mr. Syme's professional company in future,—and that too, without announcing my decision to the President of the College of Surgeons. Besides, Mr. Syme knows that, under the circumstances, it was more his duty to offer explanations and an apology, than mine to demand them. Since he did not, I determined, at least, to tell him my

impressions of his conduct. I should have done so, he avers, earlier, as 'the business of graduation *frequently* brought us together.' This 'frequently' means that we were twice or thrice present together at meetings of the Medical Faculty in the interval; but whatever Mr. Syme's creed and practice may be on this matter, I did not think proper to arrogate to myself the right to interrupt the public business of my colleagues with any private matters of Mr. Syme's and mine. Besides, Mr. Syme knows that from our professional engagements it rarely or almost never happens, that at such meetings he and I are both present together, either at the beginning or end of them, or could hence have time or opportunity for discussing any private matters.

"I feel that in one primary point I have erred. I ought not in the first instance to have condescended to notice from such a quarter such observations as Mr. Syme has published in Dr. Cormack's Journal, even though I was told by the Editor that they were, in his opinion, meant for me. I should have remembered, that the nature of Mr. Syme's paroxysmal attacks against sections of the profession in Edinburgh, or individual members of it, and the means in which he indulges in order to support them, are now so well known as not to stand in need, the one of exposure,—and the other of refutation. Believing this, and believing at the same time that all such disputations as that into which I have been most unwillingly dragged by Mr. Syme, do discredit to the profession, I shall not, in any probability, annoy you with any future remarks, let Mr. Syme affirm or deny whatever further his fancy may dictate. By acting otherwise, and by giving myself the trouble of answering in detail each new assertion that he may choose to impose upon you and the College of Physicians, I fear I should only mischievously foster his morbid appetite for professional controversy and railing.—I remain, my dear Sir, very respectfully yours, J. Y. Simpson.

"52 Queen Street, *August* 4, 1845."

DR. SIMPSON TO DR. ROBERTSON.

"My dear Sir,—Immediately after seeing Mr. Syme on the 28th June, I called upon you in driving homewards, and detailed to you minutely all the particulars of our meeting and interview. Be so kind as note down the more leading facts that I then stated to you. And let me add, that if you do not strongly object, I shall print the letter you send me in reply to this.—Very faithfully yours, J. Y. Simpson.

"52 Queen Street, *4th August* 1845."

DR. ROBERTSON TO DR. SIMPSON.

"My dear Sir,—In reply to your note, I beg to state that you called upon me on the afternoon of the 28th June, on your way home from Ainslie Place, and recounted to me minutely the details of an interview which took place between you and Mr. Syme. . . .

"You informed me that you had been called to see a boy who had fallen down stairs; that you had found the bones of the fore-arm fractured, and the lip bruised; that as there was no occasion whatever for alarm or haste, you had advised the relatives to wait the arrival of one of the several surgeons who had been sent for; that on coming down stairs from the patient's bedroom, as you reached the flat below, you met Mr. Syme hurrying up, told him the nature of the accident, and requested him to speak with you for a minute in the drawing-room; that you there told him that you had just read his observations in the newly published number of Dr. Cormack's Journal, and that he must be aware his attack upon you was a piece of unfounded professional slander; that on hearing your remarks, he began to shake with passion, and looked as if 'suddenly struck with Chorea;' that he then demanded your authority for alleging that his attack in the Journal was upon you, and that you replied that Dr. Cormack himself had stated so to you. You further stated to me, that before leaving the room, you said to Mr. Syme that you had 'one remark more which you wished

to make, namely, that his conduct towards you in the case of —— —— was, as he must be aware, utterly contemptible.'— I remain, dear Sir, faithfully yours, J. A. Robertson.

"58 Queen Street, *4th August* 1845."

I wish it had been possible to let these squabbles drop out of sight. They are not in any sense worthy. But they shed light on the origin of much of the opposition to Dr. Simpson's work, to which reference has yet to be made; and they show the bitter fruits of the attempts—inexpedient, if not illegitimate—to influence the patrons in filling up the Midwifery Chair, on other grounds than the merits of the respective candidates. But in recording them, it is not beyond the province of the biographer to express profound regret, that two such men as Simpson and Syme were found in life-long antagonism. Many who loved Simpson, and thanked God for his admirable qualities of head and heart, for the greatness of his gifts and his single-hearted devotion to the interests of humanity, held, at the same time, the greatest of Edinburgh surgeons in high admiration and esteem. His great accomplishments, the rapidity and accuracy of his diagnosis, his unsurpassed skill as an operator, the copious brevity, if I might so express it, of his description of cases—in point of style models not only for the surgeon, but for students in all departments of natural science—and even that *brusquerie* which seemed ever saying, "hands off," to all comers, but which hindered him not to speak to patients "in his own short, kind way, pitying them through his eyes,"[1] all united in winning the regard and admiration of impartial onlookers.

The tidings of these encounters soon reached London.

"My dear Simpson," writes Mr. Fergusson, "herewith I transmit a speculum, which I brought under notice last season, of which I beg your acceptance. I know not if any of the kind have yet reached Edinburgh. I occasionally have a little

[1] *Horæ Subsecivæ*, p. 379 (7th edit. 1871).

to do with such instruments, and fancy (possibly because it is my own contrivance) that this kind is of the very best. Certainly none have ever been made with such a brilliant interior, which, moreover, cannot possibly be tarnished. They are made of many shapes and sizes. This one answers but for general purposes.

"I hear of you often, and always rejoice to hear how great your success has been. Among your achievements, I have been gratified by the manner in which you have kept a certain old friend of mine in proper order, no one, since I left, having had the courage to do so but yourself.—Believe me, yours very faithfully, WM. FERGUSSON."

Called to London professionally in September 1845, he wrote to Miss Grindlay :—

"STAFFORD HOUSE, *Sunday.*

"MY DEAR ISABEL,—As I have just risen from dinner, and am not disposed just now for *study*, I will (provided you will allow me) scribble you a page.

"I arrived here on Friday, and, as I think, just in time. They were all very kind to me on my arrival ; and my rooms look into St. James's Park, with one of the prettiest views in London. Stafford House is situated between St. James's and Buckingham Palaces, and hence in a most royal vicinity. The house itself is most magnificent, particularly the entrance hall. The hall is the whole height of the house, of enormous breadth as well as height, has a hanging stair on its sides of twenty or more feet in width ; its walls are, from top to bottom, solid and variegated marble, broken with enormous marble pillars, and immense mirrors multiplying the effect of the whole. The stairs and landings are covered, every inch of them, with red cloth, and the balustrades and roof are deeply inlaid with gold. The whole looks a fairy scene ; couches and chairs are thrown around the hall, stairs, and landing, and the family seem sometimes to dine and drink tea in this part of the house. Lord Blantyre took me to-day through the drawing-rooms and pic-

ture-galleries. The walls and roofs are ebony and gold, and look magnificent. The family are all good, loveable plain folks. We all dine at the hour of *two* (how unfashionable!) tea at five or six, supper when you please. To-day our dinner party consisted of the Duke, Marquis of Stafford, Marquis of Lorne, Lord Blantyre, Lady Lorne, Lady Constance Gower, etc. Lord —— seems to me the *greatest* aristocrat of the whole, but apparently is very sharp and clever. I did not like him yesterday, but I sat next him to-day at dinner, and he talked and smoothed down wonderfully. Mr. Rashleigh, the M.P. for Cornwall, was on his other side. His wife went down to Edinburgh two weeks ago to be under my care. Lady Lorne is a very sweet, unaffected girl, and so is my patient. The Duchess is sick, and I had to prescribe for her to-day. She seems very gentle, and quite a domestic woman; her figure is magnificent. The Duke is in appearance very like Dr. Muir of Edinburgh, and the resemblance seemed both to strike and amuse Lord Lorne when I mentioned it at dinner to-day. They all eat as fast as Americans. Our dinner-table is a round one, piled with fruit in the centre, and a few dishes around the sides. All meats are brought from the side-table. The plates of silver; the potato-dishes large, plain, Scotch wooden 'cogues;' our wines, port, sherry, and claret.

"I have been very happy since I came—1st, because I have plenty of time to give to my own beloved books and papers; 2d, because I am beginning to feel rested; and 3d, because the family are so kind as to put me quite at my ease.

"My advent to London this time is certainly a very different one from what it was ten years ago. Yesterday I took a stroll out and bought the enclosed Life of me, published on the day of my arrival. Is that ominous? I have been mightily diverted by it, and laughed till I was sore at the account of the courtship. What will Jessie say? Send it up to Dr. Petrie when you are done. It will amuse him. I think I must purchase one for J. Walker. Have just had a note from

Lady G., asking me to visit her professionally. Nonsense!—
Yours ever affectionately, J. Y. S."

At the close of the year he could look back on much work attempted and much done. His class was large. His practice was still increasing, bringing with it name, and fame, and golden fruits. He had, too, been able so to seize occasion as to find time for important contributions to scientific literature, several of them of permanent value. But a time was at hand, "when the demand for his services became far beyond the power of any man to answer, when his natural kindness of heart prevented him from refusing to undertake to try to give relief, when he could not tell a patient plainly, 'I cannot undertake to see you,' and yet found his time insufficient to enable him to do so. When hundreds were languishing to see the physician whom they almost endowed in imagination with miraculous power, whom nevertheless he was compelled to disappoint, partly by the unceasing demands on his attention, and partly, no doubt, from that utter want of method which characterized his arrangements, and that very concentration of powers on one object which often refused to be distracted even by the claims of sickness for relief—and yet indefinable as all this was, and justly calculated to incense those who were dependent on his professional skill, and many of whom might have come from distant quarters to get his aid, yet it was a strange tribute to that wonderful mastery which he exercised over his patients, that however angry they may have been at marked and often persistent neglect, one kindly word or one smile from him dispelled it all, and gratitude took the place of upbraiding."[1]

The state of matters at 52 Queen Street, so well described by this writer, might have been witnessed any day in 1846. It afterwards became greatly more apparent. But even at this time patients sought him in such numbers that had he given only a few minutes to each, the day would have been too

[1] *Scotsman*, May 9, 1870.

short to enable him to overtake the half of them, and all other work would have been out of the question. But his class had to be attended to. Dangerous cases at a distance claimed his care, and got it readily. He had to fulfil promises made to conductors of public journals. Practitioners in town and country who came to solicit his attention to cases of interest and difficulty could not be turned away. Strangers of note and of no note—English, Continental, American—dropped in at breakfast-time or at lunch and took up a good deal of his time. Letters reached him daily in dozens, from practitioners who would have felt insulted had they been answered by any hand but his own. In other ways he allowed his time to be broken in on. When, in 1846, a vacancy occurred in the Chair of Anatomy, one candidate and another applied to him in terms that indicated their belief that he had taken the place of another Professor, who used to be known as the "Chair-maker," from his success in matters of this kind. Then there were ladies of rank and wives of professional gentlemen who backed their claims to immediate attention by letters from their husbands. It would not be true to say that his attention was distracted in the midst of all this, because he refused to let it be so. He gave himself to the cases that seemed most important; sometimes to less important ones pressed persistently on his attention, especially by professional friends. But all could not be overtaken, and reports soon spread that his patients were neglected, that dangerous cases were not closely watched after his first interference with them, and, generally, that there was something altogether wrong and blameworthy in all this. In every profession there are men who are ill at ease when in company with those who are taller than they by head and shoulders, who grudge the rising fame of brethren, who think themselves as good as they are, and believe they would have been equally successful had they been favoured with the same chances:

> "Why has such worth without distinction died?
> Why, like the desert lily, bloomed to fade?"

This is the class to which evil reports against a neighbour may generally be traced. Its zeal in circulating charges of neglect, to the risk of life even, soon became apparent. But there were others, whom Dr. Simpson knew to be friends, tried and true, who heard the reports with sorrow and alarm, and took the earliest opportunity to offer their advice, for which he was grateful. "The tongue of the wise is health."

"QUEEN STREET, *6th April* 1846.

"MY DEAR DR.,—Nothing but the high esteem and affection I bear you, and the deep gratitude which I feel for unbounded kindness and attention when sickness and death were present in my own family, could induce me to take up the pen on a subject which must be very painful to you, and in which I have no right to interfere. I trust, however, to your considering my doing so as the act of a true friend. It is to point out to you the reports which are everywhere current of your inattention to patients who place themselves under your care; that you neglect one set for the sake of another; that you make appointments, keep patients in their beds waiting for you day after day; that letters remain unanswered, and that patients are often left in ignorance whether they are to alter, continue, or give up the remedies you have prescribed; and, in short, it is said by some that a patient cannot with safety intrust herself to your care from these causes. Now, my dear Dr., allow me to say candidly that in these matters you are not doing justice either to yourself or your patients, and that if even a slight foundation be given for a continuance of these reports in the public mind, no talents, however great, will ultimately bear up against them.

"Now such instances of inattention must result from one of two causes: either that you have more practice than any single individual is equal to, or that there is a want of due arrangement. If the former, in my opinion you should decline taking charge of a portion of your patients, to whom you feel you cannot do full justice. If the latter, let your arrangements

be changed. Whenever on leaving a patient you fix a day for again visiting her, enter it *at the moment* in your visit-book. Let it be at all times most correctly kept. Each day let a list of the visits be made out. If there be any which you find you cannot accomplish, let a note *be immediately* sent to the patient intimating the circumstance, and fixing when you will call. If sent for unexpectedly to a case in which you are likely to be detained, let a message be sent to those expecting you. I am certain if you were to adopt some such method, you would do away with many of the current reports. If in the same manner you have not time to answer letters of consultation fully at the time they are expected, let a short note be written mentioning the circumstance. Now, my dear Dr., excuse me for stating the *absolute necessity* of some change being made. Your present mode must be injurious to your patients, and will ultimately be much more so to yourself. I have again to beg you to excuse me—that you will attribute my interference solely to the interest I take in all that concerns you, and that *I know* the advantage that is taken of these things by interested individuals, and those who have no kindly feeling towards you. —I remain, my dear Dr., ever faithfully yours,

"J. A. ROBERTSON."

"I have another little matter," wrote Dr. Sharpey. "D., now a physician in L., called on me lately. In the course of our conversation about Edinburgh folks, he seemed to be *sore* that in a case in which he consulted you, you had not written him yourself, but put him off with a formal letter by your secretary or assistant. I think it right you should know this, although, of course, I have never let D. know my intention. If a *favourable opportunity* should occur, it might be well to write him a friendly letter, and refer to the circumstance with the view of explaining it. English practitioners are very touchy about these things, and our surgeons and physicians (Chambers and Brodie) always, if well, write

autograph epistles, especially *to practitioners*. But I must say that D. rather felt it as coming from an old acquaintance.

"I should say (if I might venture to say anything on the matter) that your best plan would be to make an amanuensis write in your name, you speaking in the first person, and you appending your signature. There could be no objection to this in professional correspondence.—Yours very sincerely,

"W. SHARPEY."

That there was some cause for these interferences on the part of friends cannot be denied. And, of course, blame lay with Dr. Simpson if he neglected any case he might have overtaken, or did not make some provision for the treatment of any cases he knew to be serious, but which were beyond his own reach.

Patients who thought themselves aggrieved, seldom failed to make it known by personal communications, by their relatives, or their usual medical attendant. As all communications from patients were preserved, I have had an opportunity of perusing them. They are thousands in number. The proportion of letters of complaint among these is very small, compared with those expressing gratitude for kind attentions or for health restored. Some of them, moreover, are most unreasonable. No doubt, had Dr. Simpson adopted the business methods recommended by his friends Sharpey and Robertson, he could have given systematic attention to more patients than was possible otherwise. It was clear he could not do justice to all. To have said, "I cannot see you, my hands are already too full of work," would only have increased the crowd. When, for example, he made known his unwillingness to attend patients out of Edinburgh, whose cases were not special or dangerous, the object he had in view was frustrated. Patients hastened to Edinburgh, and swelled the company that waited daily in Queen Street. The difficulty of obtaining his advice and

attendance only stimulated nervous patients to extra efforts. In many instances when called to see them in their own homes, or in lodgings, he found them not so ill as they imagined, and left them to seek the aid of other practitioners. Not unseldom this led to evil. Gossiping men are not likely ever to perish from the earth. The remark dropped thoughtlessly, and without any bad intention, "You are the third or fourth I have been asked to attend in consequence of Dr. Simpson's forgetfulness," or a like expression, led to exaggerated reports of neglect, sometimes of death from neglect. There were also instances in which he believed a patient might be left for a season without injury, or in which delay was necessary, before he could decide on the kind of treatment. His want of an exact system of registration sometimes led to their dropping out of sight, and both they and he suffered in consequence. Frequently, when interrupted in a case of importance, or in the midst of earnest conversation on a subject of great interest, and asked to wait on a patient, he would promise to call on the morrow. But not having made a note of his promise, when the morrow came other demands crowded on him, and the engagement slipped out of memory. Some bore this with great patience, got a friend to remind him of it, or sought him at his own house. But others, holding themselves personally insulted by his treatment of relatives, demanded an apology. "I recapitulate what occurred," wrote a Colonel of Dragoons, "that there may be no mistake as to facts. I have now to request that you will oblige me with an explanation of a course of conduct not only at variance with all the duties of a professional person, but inconsistent with the common and acknowledged courtesies of life. I claim an explanation as the husband of Mrs. ——, and also as your obedient servant, ——, Colonel of —— Dragoons." In this case Dr. Simpson might have shown, that the facts recapitulated contain his vindication, but he left the matter alone.

Dr. Robertson was in error when he referred to "the

neglect of one set for the sake of another." Neither exalted rank nor great wealth determined the kind of attention bestowed on patients. The precedency of the application, the appearance of immediate danger, or the rarity of the case in medical practice, combined with its scientific interest, were the elements that chiefly influenced him. When adventitious circumstances intervened, they were such as personal friendship, old ties of neighbourhood, school-companionship, or, not unfrequently, the knowledge that the patient was more or less closely related to men from whom he had received personal unkindness, misrepresentation of motive or act, or public opposition. Many illustrations of his devotion to friends and their relatives might be given. I have pleasure in mentioning one. He had learned incidentally at the close of his day's work that —— was dangerously ill. After a drive of more than twenty miles in a dark night, he looked in on the sufferer a little after midnight, and prescribed remedies that at once checked the progress of the disease, and, in the long-run, brought health.

There are proofs among his papers, that persons of exalted rank and great wealth had their full share of the inconvenience arising from want of immediate attention to written communications, or the delay of personal visits. In many cases, however, the delay and apparent neglect were intentional. Treatment prescribed was expected, after a time, to assume symptoms on which he calculated conditionally. But when they occurred, patients and their friends became alarmed, and concluded that they would not have happened had he been unremitting in his attendance. He might, indeed, have warned them of this, and so far have prevented misapprehension. But had the symptoms not appeared, the alarm and injury would have been much greater, especially in the case of nervous patients. Had he loved fees more, he would have kept a correct list of his patients and of the number of visits paid to them. This would not only have greatly increased his income, it would have saved much of his time also. Multitudes who waited on him

day after day would have been more sparing of their visits, had they felt a fee was expected for each, and many who were not seriously ill would have trusted themselves to other practitioners. But he ever shrank from arrangements that seemed to him fitted to associate the idea of remunerative trade with the practice of his noble profession. He may have been in error on this point; I think he was; but it is difficult to attach much blame to acts which spring from this impression. Selfishness and cupidity could have no hold of the heart of one who acted thus. But more: he was not responsible for many of the instances of reputed neglect, and in some of them he was justified. I have found that frequently his notes of instruction to country practitioners were, on the return home of patients, withheld from motives of delicacy. They were unwilling to make known that they had sought other advice, or they were unwilling to make neighbours aware of their ailings. When compelled by the course of the disease to consult another doctor, the effects of the delay were generally charged to Dr. Simpson. There were, moreover, communications left unanswered which he would have most willingly attended to. He once showed me three letters just received. One contained a fee for £100; another was from Germany, from an unknown correspondent; and the third from London. By the postmark on the first he learned who was the sender. It contained only "With compts.," and no name. In the second he was asked to inform the writer when he was likely to be in London, and was requested to write to him there! In the third he was told "he would oblige by desiring *Duncan and Flockhart* to forward a bottle of the medicine obtained a year ago." The medicine might have been got, but the writer neglected to give her name! "I will get a good blowing up some day for not replying to all these notes," he remarked, as he put them away to wait for an answer. There are notes from patients requesting a visit at their hotel, and from friends of patients telling him he would find them at their hotel in Princes Street,

but forgetting to name the hotel. In one instance of this kind I was with him when he called at two hotels, asking in vain for a patient in whose case he was much interested. He found her at the third. He was, also, often annoyed at the manner in which fees were paid. One man of wealth enclosed £10, in circumstances in which £100 might have been expected, adding, "I am not sure if the amount is more or less than is usual on such occasions, but I will be guided by what you say when you acknowledge this." It was not acknowledged, and note after note arrived in fevered haste—"You have not acknowledged remittance on 12th of £10; I hope it reached you?" Later, "There surely must be some mistake," etc. And later still, "Your conduct is so surprising," etc. But in vain. Perhaps the writer would have been more indignant had he known the treatment his fee received. It was put carelessly into a capacious pocket, which received and held, often for a week or two, many strange epistles. During a boisterous night his sleep was disturbed by the rattling of the window-frame, and drawing on the pocket for a bit of paper, wherewith to tighten the loose sash, the £10 note had come readiest to hand, and was employed for this purpose, and found by Mrs. Simpson in the morning in its useful position. His only remark was, "Oh! it's *that* £10." Then he received communications which no busy man could afford time to answer :—

"*May* 25, /46.

"DEAR SIR,—As Lady ——'s *last* and very urgent letter has been, *as usual*, unattended to by you, I am determined to make another attempt to elicit a reply from you. I beg, therefore, to do so now. I shall not say one word as to the neglect with which Lady Anne's letters have been treated by you. Your own conscience must be a sufficient monitor on that subject.—Yours truly."

The "very urgent matter" was a question touching the expediency of applying three leeches to the hip-joint, as recommended by him, or of two, as prescribed by the local prac-

titioner, whom Dr. Simpson knew to be a man of sense and skill.

The growth of his influence exposed him to many applications he could not so easily set aside. When any of his colleagues were concerned he acted with readiness and cordiality, and never grudged the time given. Here are two specimens, out of many that might be quoted, of this kind of communications, that got a good deal of his time :—

DR. TODD TO DR. SIMPSON.

"3 New St., Spring Gardens, *June* 9, 1846.

"My dear Sir,—You kindly aided me on a former occasion *in re* Allen Thomson.

"A new colleague of yours undertook, three years ago, three articles for the Cyclopædia.

"I can get neither the MSS. from him, for which I am now waiting, nor even a civil answer to my letters, which have been very numerous. This latter is too bad. I am unconscious of having given him any occasion of offence, unless, indeed, in my last letter, in which I spoke pretty plainly about his utter want of courtesy.

"Will you oblige me by seeing him, and ascertaining the real cause of his proceedings? I do not wish to think unfavourably of a man of his abilities; but I must say that I have never before experienced such treatment from a person calling himself a gentleman.

"He did not hesitate to ask me for a testimonial when he was canvassing for the Chair, which I sent him, as you are probably aware. Even this he had not the civility to acknowledge, although I know that he did so to others.

"I should also be glad to know whether I may have any reasonable expectation of getting the articles.

"I must apologize to you for imposing this trouble upon you in the midst of your manifold engagements.

"Your friend —— has, I think, shown himself in his true

colours, and will be in future understood and shunned by all respectable men.—Believe me, my dear Sir, yours sincerely,

"R. B. Todd."

SIR GEORGE BALLINGALL TO DR. SIMPSON.

"Altamont, Blairgowrie, 17*th Sept.* 1846.

"My dear Sir,—I regretted very much that I had not time to call upon you, when in Edinburgh for a few hours last week; and my object in writing now is to see if you can do me the favour of transmitting to Lord John Russell (with whom, I believe, you have the honour of being acquainted) a copy of my last Introductory Lecture. I have reason to believe that my project of establishing lectureships on Military Surgery in London and Dublin has been pressed successfully on the attention of some of the members of the present Government; and if you can take the liberty of soliciting the Premier's attention to it, you will oblige me very sincerely.—Yours ever very faithfully, Geo. Ballingall."

In the midst of so much to engross his time and attention, eminent men of less deep affection and weaker home sympathies might have been led to forget, or to act as if they forgot, relatives moving in a circle much humbler than theirs. But his heart went out as freshly and earnestly to them all as before :—

"My dear Sandy,—I was very, very sorry to hear you were complaining so much. If we had not our examinations I would come out to see you; but you can do much better: come in to me for a few days, and I have no doubt you will soon get well. In such affections, *one* of the principal remedies is the use of hot baths. We have one both here and in Albany Street, and I am sure you would benefit greatly by them. Jessie and I will take no denial. You will have a room, bath, and bedroom here for your sole use. I am always down at dinner, and with bowls, etc. etc., we think we could get your

time spent agreeably—at least we will strive to do so. We know Janet and you could not both leave at the same time, but do bring one of my nephews to be your bedfellow. Such complaints should not be thought light of, and you must, my dear Sandy, come to me. Jessie and I will expect you on Friday.—With kindest regards to Janet, yours ever affectionately, J. Y. Simpson.

"Starbank, Trinity, *Wednesday*."

He greatly needed rest, and a complete change of scene and circumstance. The opportunity soon came. He was invited by Lord Blantyre to visit Erskine House, where for a brief season he greatly enjoyed himself. But Bathgate affairs were not forgotten. While referring to them he enters into some charmingly simple details touching ladies' head-gear, for the special information of his sister-in-law, the baker's wife:—

"My dear Sandy,—I daresay you will be wondering what has become of the *Scotsman*.

"I have been down here for three weeks at Lord Blantyre's, and never thought of the papers till I found a great parcel of them yesterday huddled together. Jessie takes charge of them all at home, and directs them, and I never thought of my neglect till yesterday. I go home to-morrow, and they will all be sent right again.

"I have been down dining and sleeping at Mr. Ewing's of Strathleven,—was on the top of Dumbarton, and had a beautiful view.

"While here I have been repeatedly at Loch Lomond, Gare Loch, etc., hunting, etc., and feel a great deal stronger of it all. Jessie has been at St. Cyrus with the children.

"Erskine House is very large and gorgeous. The hall is 118 feet long. The Duchess of Sutherland, the Marquis and Marchioness of Lorne, and two Ladies Gower have made up, with myself, all the strangers. We have also two very

little lords—Lord Albert Gower, three years old; and Lord Campbell, eleven months.

"Tell Janet I think *now* artificial flowers very ungenteel. The ladies here wear nothing but real flowers in their hair, and every day they come down with something new, and for us males to guess at. Often the Duchess wears a simple chaplet of ivy leaves, sometimes a bracken leaf is all she sports in her head ornaments, and beautiful it looks. Rowans and 'haws' are often worn, beaded into crowns, or flowers, or chaplets. Heather, also, is a great favourite. On Thursday, Lady Lorne came down with a *most* beautiful chaplet tying round and keeping down her braided hair. It was a long bunch of bramble leaves and half ripe bramble berries—actual true *brambles*.

"They have been all exceedingly kind to me, and I really feel quite at home among them, though the only *un*titled personage at table.—Yours ever affectionately,

"J. Y. Simpson."

The closing words remind one of Sir Walter Scott's reference to his own feelings, when his success opened to him free access to the dwellings of the great:—"I do not mean to say that my success in literature has not led me to mix familiarly in society much above my birth and pretensions, since I have been readily received into the first circles of Britain. But there is a certain intuitive knowledge of the world to which most well-educated Scotchmen are early trained, that prevents them from being much daunted by this species of elevation. . . . I have never therefore felt much elevated, nor did I experience any violent change in situation by the passport which my poetical character afforded me into higher company than my birth warranted."

CHAPTER VIII.

ANÆSTHESIA.

Physician to the Queen—Use of Ether as an Anæsthetic—Letter to Dr. J. B. Fleming—Preliminary Objections—Police Statistics of Drunkenness—Drs. Locock and Protheroe Smith on Ether—Dr. Magnus Retzius—Dr. Kreiger—Chloroform—Cases—Note from Liston—Notes from the Duchess of Argyll, Lady Blantyre, Dr. Christison, Dr. Johnston of Berwick, and Dr. Locock—Claims of M. Flourens—Religious Objections—Put on the Defensive—Dr. Morton—Dr. Jackson—Letters to Dr. Bigelow—Second Pamphlet—Dr. Meigs—Religious Objections—Dr. Ashwell—Critical Examination of Scripture—Opinion of Dr. Chalmers—Results—Letter from Sir James Clarke, Her Majesty's Physician—Complete Success.

In January 1847 Dr. Simpson was appointed one of Her Majesty's Physicians for Scotland. The tidings first reached him in the following communication from the late Duchess of Sutherland :—

"Stafford House, *January 18th.*

"Dear Sir,—It was a great pleasure to me to receive yesterday a letter from the Queen, telling me that she should have much pleasure in complying with the request, 'which his high character and abilities make him very fit for.' The Queen adds that it will be officially communicated to you.—I remain, dear Sir, yours very truly, Harriet Sutherland."

He was proud of this token of Her Majesty's favour.

"My dear Sandy,—I believe you will be glad to hear that I am to be appointed one of Her Majesty's Physicians for Scotland. The death of Dr. Davidson (who succeeded Dr.

Abercrombie) has left a vacancy in the Scotch Royal Household. Her Grace the Duchess of Sutherland wrote directly to the Queen wishing for my appointment, and she has sent me an extract from a letter of Her Majesty to her Grace, saying that she (the Queen) would nominate me, 'which' (to quote the Queen's note) 'his high character and abilities make him very fit for.' Flattery *from the Queen* is perhaps *not* common flattery, but I am far less interested in it than in having delivered a woman this week *without* any pain while inhaling sulphuric ether. I can think of naught else. No emolument is directly connected with the office, and I do not talk of it yet, because it is not yet officially announced to me. I had no ambition for it, but several of the older hands here were candidates, and there is some satisfaction in beating them so easily. Lord John Russell does not yet *know* of Her Majesty's resolution, as his lady wrote me to-day that he was going to exert his influence for my nomination.

"I had one gay day in London lately; I breakfasted with the Secretary of War, dined with the Mistress of the Robes, and had tea and an egg with the Premier. I went with Professor Murphy to see all the crack doctors at an evening discussion Society, and (oddly enough) found some of them busy speaking against me and my published opinions. I was driven to speak in self-defence, and set them right. It was a curious coincidence my popping in upon them at the time.

"Kindest regards to Janet and all.—Yours ever most affectionately. J. Y. Simpson.

"*Friday evening.*"

The congratulations that followed showed what a strong hold he had already taken of the public mind. Her Majesty's act was most popular. Sir James Clarke and other eminent practitioners in the metropolis, high officers of State, distinguished foreigners, and leading men among the nobility, hastened to inform him of their personal gratification. The

following note from the tenth Duke of Hamilton and Brandon, grandfather of the present Duke (1873), indicates the very cordial way in which the honour was regarded by many noblemen :—

"PORTMAN SQUARE, *February 4th*, 1847.

"SIR,—The Duchess unfortunately, in consequence of the sad state of her eyes, cannot write herself, but I hope you remain convinced of the grateful sense we both entertain of your ability in treating, and attention to, the Princess Marie, our daughter-in-law, two years ago in Edinburgh.

"We were truly glad to see that an honorary tribute had been paid to your merit by your late nomination to the Queen's household establishment. . . .

"I rejoice in any opportunity that enables me to assure you of those sentiments of esteem, with which I am, Sir, your most obedient servant, H. AND B."

The reference to the inhalation of sulphuric ether, in the letter to his brother, and the strong expression, "I can think of naught else," show how intensely interested he was in the discovery. Ever since he witnessed the terrible agony of the poor Highland woman, even under the knife of one of the most expert surgeons of his own or of any day, he had been casting about him for some mode of relief to such sufferers. "I most conscientiously believe that the proud mission of the physician is distinctly twofold, namely, to alleviate human suffering as well as to preserve human life." On the 21st of December 1846, Mr. Liston amputated a thigh, and removed, by evulsion, both sides of the great toe-nail, while the patients were under ether. And now Dr. Simpson was convinced that even the severest surgical operations might be made painless. His mind was fully occupied with the thought. If in the surgeon's hands a patient could be rendered insensible to pain during an operation, might not the same agent be made fruitful of blessing in the hands of the accoucheur? On the 9th March 1847 he wrote to

his friend Dr. J. B. Fleming, then stationed at Secunderabad :—

"My dear Sir,—I have sent you a short paper on Ether. *All* here use it in surgical operations, and no doubt, in a few years, its employment will be general over the civilized world. We do not know yet who was the original suggester, Mr. Hickman, Mr. Wells, Dr. Jackson, or Dr. Merton. But it is a 'great thought,' if ever there was one.

"The great secret of its exhibition is giving a *large*, full, and *rapid* dose of it at once.

"With many other medical men, I have taken it myself to try its effects. It is the only just way of judging of it.—With best wishes for your success, believe me, very truly yours,

"J. Y. Simpson."

"I can think of naught else." This was almost literally true during the summer of 1847. The successful use of ether in the case mentioned in his note to Sandy was immediately communicated to the *Monthly Journal of Medical Science*, and fuller information was supplied in the March number, under the title "Notes on the Inhalation of Sulphuric Ether in the Practice of Midwifery." This motto, from Shakespeare, was affixed—

> "Not poppy, nor mandragora,
> Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world
> Shall ever medicine thee to such sweet sleep."

In these *Notes* he said, "Abundant evidence has of late been adduced, and is daily accumulating, in proof of the inhalation of sulphuric ether being capable, in the generality of individuals, of producing a more or less perfect degree of insensibility to the pains of the most severe surgical operations. But whilst this agent has been used extensively and by numerous hands in the practice of surgery, I am not aware that any one has hitherto ventured to test its applicability to the practice of Midwifery. . . . Within the last few months I have had op-

portunities of using the inhalation of ether, in many cases of great difficulty, as well as in ordinary ones." He then specifies the cases, and afterwards endeavours to trace the idea of the use of anæsthetics to its original source. "Long ago, in discussing this subject, Haller adduced the authority of Harvey, Smellie, Lamotte, etc., to prove that there may be births while the mother is 'ignara, stupida, et sopita, et immobili, et apoplectica, et epileptica, et convulsionibus agitata, et ad summum debili.'" Some curious illustrations are given, and he concludes, "I have stated that the question I have been repeatedly asked is this: Will we ever be 'justified' in using the vapour of ether to assuage the pains of natural labour? Now, if experience betimes goes fully to prove to us the safety with which ether may, under proper precautions and management, be employed, then, looking to the facts of the case, and considering the actual amount of pain usually endured, I believe that the question will require to be quite changed in its character. For instead of determining in relation to it whether we shall be 'justified' in using this agent under the circumstances named, it will become, on the other hand, necessary to determine whether, on any grounds, moral or medical, a professional man could deem himself 'justified in withholding and *not* using any such safe means as we at present presuppose this to be.'" In the cases specified in this paper, he was assisted by one or more professional friends,—as Dr. John Moir, Dr. Graham Weir, Dr. George Keith, and Dr. Ziegler.

The Notes were printed separately, and widely distributed among professional men at home and abroad. Though he made no other claim for himself than that of priority in the use of ether in his department, he yet felt bound to publish the facts, and to secure their wide circulation, with the view of forcing it on the notice of practitioners, and of urging its adoption in the interests of humanity. Neither time, labour, nor expense was spared. But he soon found he had entered on a work which

was speedily to task his highest powers of thought, perseverance, and patience. Custom, prejudice, professional jealousy, fancies touching the inevitable lot of man and the alleged therapeutic blessing of the consciousness of pain, joined to the timidity natural to many of his accomplished fellow-workers, all began to bear bitter fruits. He found hesitancy where he looked for forward zeal, strong opposition where cordiality was counted on, and adverse public criticism—the worse to bear when he believed he could trace it to private malice. But he was sure of his ground, and resolute not to leave it. His early ambition had been

> "To employ
> The mind's brave ardour in heroic aims."

And he had now another great opportunity. He determined, should need be, to appeal from the profession to the patients themselves, and thus to constrain even unwilling practitioners to use ether, should he find it answered all his expectations. Meanwhile, though not fully satisfied with ether, he was firmly convinced that there were other therapeutic agents which, if introduced into the system, would answer all the ends he had in view. He now set himself to search for these. In the course of his inquiries, his suspicions of the unsatisfactory character of ether as an anæsthetic were confirmed. It was not likely to suit general practice. He saw, too, more clearly the true force of the objections sure to be urged against the use of any such agent. One of these, of a very general kind, constantly met him on the threshold of his inquiries. Waving, some said, the discussion of other questions of great importance, is there not danger, if not even positive injury, to the individual, in the use of anything that puts will in abeyance, or that, for the time, destroys self-consciousness? Would you not at least produce evils similar to those that result from stupefaction by alcohol or any other powerful narcotic? Most men would have accepted this general plea as a bar to the use of anæsthetics, or, at least, have tried to escape by pleading a specialty in favour

of their employment in disease. But Dr. Simpson asked in turn,—Is the mere condition of intoxication as injurious to the body as is generally supposed? The objectors had thus a new subject thrust on them. He sought the answer in his own characteristic way. Might not the police books shed some light on the subject? In reply to a communication on this question, Dr. Tait wrote :—

"Edinburgh Police Office, 17*th March* 1847.

"Dear Sir,—In reference to the subject about which you spoke to me yesterday, I beg to send you the following facts :—

"It is now five years since I was appointed Surgeon of Police, and during this time the average number of cases of individuals in a state of intoxication brought to the office has been 5671 annually, being in all 28,357. Out of all this number only *three* have died, and it is even questionable if *simple* intoxication was the *cause* of death in these instances, although it may have indirectly contributed to it. The number that I may have been called to examine is about 400 annually, the great majority of which I was requested to see at my usual visits to the office, and not *sent* for to see. Fifty per annum will be about the number of serious cases to which I am expressly called, and active treatment may be required in eighteen or twenty of these. So that, altogether, whisky must be one of the most harmless of all poisons. If any further information is wanted upon the subject, I will be glad to furnish it.—Yours truly, William Tait."

Dr. Simpson, it need scarcely be added, was not looking either at the sin of drunkenness, or at the moral and physical evils which are its fruits. He simply wished to know, what one so favourably situated for such observations as a police surgeon could tell him of its physiological influence. Dr. Tait's letter in reply is curious, though it fails to shed much, if any, light on the matter. Indeed, this kind of evidence was not

admissible. That the object in view was simply to ascertain the effect of the use of anæsthetics, under the authority and presence of a medical adviser forbade comparison.

But all were not sceptics. Dr. Simpson was much gratified by the readiness with which several Edinburgh practitioners accepted his views. From London, moreover, he received communications of special interest.

FROM DR. LOCOCK.

"Hertford Street, *March* 8, 1847.

"My dear Sir,—Many thanks for your pamphlet on the ether inhalation, with which I have been much interested. People here and in Paris are getting frightened about it, as the arterial blood becomes black under its influence, and a few deaths have occurred. In time it will get to its level, after going through the usual preliminaries of over-praise and under-praise, and after the ordinary mischief from the injudicious applications of a valuable discovery. . . . I find the ether inhalation, not pushed to the degree of producing stupor, a most effectual and *rapid* relief in dysmennorrhœa—try it.—Yours very sincerely, C. Locock."

FROM DR. PROTHEROE SMITH.

"15 John Street, Bedford Row, *April* 21, 1847.

"My dear Sir,—Ether here is at a discount amongst the obstetric practitioners generally. I have, however, tested its powers, and am satisfied of the justice of your opinions. I have written a paper advocating its adoption. The first part of my paper (illustrated by cases) is now in the hands of the printer. I am desirous to ascertain the number of cases in which you have employed this agent, and the result to both mother and child, with the view to sustain my arguments in its favour by your extensive experience. Should you feel disposed to give me any other facts of practical interest to append to my paper, I shall feel greatly obliged. I have entered at

some length on the physiology of the question, and shall be glad our views correspond on this subject.

"Dreadfully tired from having just completed my paper, which I was obliged to write hastily, believe me, always yours, PROTHEROE SMITH."

Dr. Magnus Retzius, a Danish obstetrician of high scientific attainments, in a letter dated April 6, 1847, first put in a clear, succinct, and definite shape two chief objections to the use of ether, later urged by others with great warmth and pertinacity against the use of chloroform. Dr. Simpson was thus early prepared to deal with them. These had reference to the influence of the will of the patient in seconding the efforts of the physician, and to, what some held to be, the beneficial influences of the action of a creative law.

An eminent Russian practitioner saw some of the same objections, but he saw also their answer, and informed Dr. Simpson of his views. Dr. Kreiger of Berlin writes :—"Your paper on the administration of ether in obstetric practice was read with the highest interest at a meeting of the Obstetric Society of our city. It has elected you an honorary and corresponding member." Thus, by his energy and perseverance, the use of ether had the attention of medical men all over the world turned to it, and they were thereby prepared to give immediate heed to the great discovery which now made his own heart glad. On the 10th of March 1847, he communicated a paper on Chloroform to the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh :—

"From the time at which I first saw ether-inhalation successfully practised in January last, I have had the conviction impressed upon my mind, that we would ultimately find that other therapeutic agents were capable of being introduced with equal rapidity and success into the system, through the same extensive and powerful channel of pulmonary absorption. . . .

"With various professional friends, more conversant with

chemistry than I am, I have, since that time, taken opportunities of talking over the idea which I entertained of the probable existence or discovery of new therapeutic agents, capable of being introduced into the system by respiration, and the possibility of producing for inhalation vaporizable or volatile preparations of some of our more active and old-established medicines: and I have had, during the summer and autumn, ethereal tinctures, etc., of several potent drugs, manufactured for me, for experiment, by Messrs. Duncan, Flockhart, and Co., the excellent chemists and druggists of this city.

"Latterly, in order to avoid, if possible, some of the inconveniences and objections pertaining to sulphuric ether (particularly its disagreeable and very persistent smell, its occasional tendency to irritation of the bronchi during its first inspirations, and the large quantity of it occasionally required to be used, more especially in protracted cases of labour), I have tried upon myself and others the inhalation of different other volatile fluids, with the hope that some one of them might be found to possess the advantages of ether, without its disadvantages. . . .

"Chloroform was first discovered and described at nearly the same time by Soubeiran (1831), and Liebig (1832); its composition was first accurately ascertained by the distinguished French chemist, Dumas, in 1835. . . .

"It is a dense, limpid, colourless liquid, readily evaporating, and possessing an agreeable, fragrant, fruit-like odour, and a saccharine pleasant taste.

"As an inhaled anæsthetic agent, it possesses over sulphuric ether the following advantages:—

"1. A greatly less quantity of chloroform than of ether is requisite to produce the anæsthetic effect; usually from a hundred to a hundred and twenty drops of chloroform only being sufficient; and with some patients much less. I have seen a strong person rendered completely insensible by six or seven inspirations of thirty drops of the liquid.

" 2. Its action is much more rapid and complete, and generally more persistent. I have almost always seen from ten to twenty full inspirations suffice. Hence the time of the surgeon is saved; and that preliminary stage of excitement, which pertains to all narcotizing agents, being curtailed, or indeed practically abolished, the patient has not the same degree of tendency to exhilaration and talking.

" 3. Most of those who know from previous experience the sensations produced by ether inhalation, and who have subsequently breathed the chloroform, have strongly declared the inhalation and influence of chloroform to be far more agreeable and pleasant than those of ether.

" 4. I believe, that considering the small quantity requisite, as compared with ether, the use of chloroform will be less expensive than that of ether; more especially, as there is every prospect that the means of forming it may be simplified and cheapened.

" 5. Its perfume is not unpleasant, but the reverse; and the odour of it does not remain, for any length of time, obstinately attached to the clothes of the attendant,—or exhaling in a disagreeable form from the lungs of the patient, as so generally happens with sulphuric ether.

" 6. Being required in much less quantity, it is much more portable and transmissible than sulphuric ether.

" 7. No special kind of inhaler or instrument is necessary for its exhibition. A little of the liquid diffused upon the interior of a hollow-shaped sponge, or a pocket-handkerchief, or a piece of linen or paper, and held over the mouth and nostrils, so as to be fully inhaled, generally suffices in about a minute or two to produce the desired effect." . . .

After referring in detail to the chemical constitution of chloroform, he adds :—

" It is perhaps not unworthy of remark, that when Soubeiran, Liebig, and Dumas engaged, a few years back, in those inquiries and experiments by which the formation and composition

of chloroform was first discovered, their sole and only object was the investigation of a point in philosophical chemistry. They laboured for the pure love and extension of knowledge. They had no idea that the substance to which they called the attention of their chemical brethren could or would be turned to any *practical* purpose, or that it possessed any physiological or therapeutic effects upon the animal economy. I mention this to show, that the *cui bono* argument against philosophical investigations, on the ground that there may be at first no apparent practical benefit to be derived from them, has been amply refuted in this, as it has been in many other instances. For I feel assured, that the use of chloroform will soon entirely supersede the use of ether; and, from the facility and rapidity of its exhibition, it will be employed as an anæsthetic agent in many cases, and under many circumstances, in which ether would never have been had recourse to. Here then we have a substance which, in the first instance, was merely interesting as a matter of scientific curiosity and research, becoming rapidly an object of intense importance, as an agent by which human suffering and agony may be annulled and abolished, under some of the most trying circumstances in which human nature is ever placed.

"Since the above observations were sent to the press, I have—through the great kindness of Professor Miller and Dr. Duncan—had an opportunity of trying the effects of the inhalation of chloroform, to-day, in three cases of operation in the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh. A great collection of professional gentlemen and students witnessed the results, and among the number was Professor Dumas of Paris, the chemist who first ascertained and established the chemical composition of chloroform. He happened to be passing through Edinburgh, engaged along with Dr. Milne Edwards, who accompanied him, in an official investigation for the French Government,—and was, in no small degree, rejoiced to witness the wonderful physiological effects of a substance with whose chemical history his own name was so intimately connected.

"I append notes, obligingly furnished to me by Professor Miller and Dr. Duncan, of the three cases of operation. The two first cases were operated on by Professor Miller, the third by Dr. Duncan. In applying the chloroform in the first case, I used a pocket-handkerchief as the inhaling instrument; in the two last I employed a hollow sponge.

"CASE I.—'A boy, four or five years old, with necrosis of one of the bones of the fore-arm. Could speak nothing but Gaelic. No means, consequently, of explaining to him what he was required to do. On holding a handkerchief, on which some chloroform had been sprinkled, to his face, he became frightened, and wrestled to be away. He was held gently, however, by Dr. Simpson, and obliged to inhale. After a few inspirations he ceased to cry or move, and fell into a sound snoring sleep. A deep incision was now made down to the diseased bone; and, by the use of the forceps, nearly the whole of the radius, in the state of sequestrum, was extracted. During this operation, and the subsequent examination of the wound by the finger, not the slightest evidence of the suffering of pain was given. He still slept on soundly, and was carried back to his ward in that state. Half an hour afterwards, he was found in bed, like a child newly awakened from a refreshing sleep, with a clear merry eye, and placid expression of countenance, wholly unlike what is found to obtain after ordinary etherization. On being questioned by a Gaelic interpreter who was found among the students, he stated that he had never felt any pain, and that he felt none now. On being shown his wounded arm he looked much surprised, but neither cried nor otherwise expressed the slightest alarm.'

"CASE II.—'A soldier who had an opening in the cheek—the result of exfoliation of the jaw—was next made to inhale. At first he showed some signs of moving his hands too freely; but soon also fell into a state of sleep and snoring. A free incision was made across the lower jaw, and from this the dense adhering integuments were freely dissected all round, so as to raise the soft parts of the cheek. The edges of the open-

ing were then made raw, and the whole line of incision was brought together by several points of suture. This patient had previously undergone two minor operations of a somewhat similar kind; both of them had proved unsuccessful, and he bore them very ill—proving unusually unsteady, and complaining bitterly of severe pain. On the present occasion, he did not wince or moan in the slightest degree; and, on the return of consciousness, said that he felt nothing. His first act, when apparently about half awake, was suddenly to clutch up the sponge with which the chloroform was used, and re-adjust it to his mouth, obviously implying that he had found the inhalation from it anything but a disagreeable duty.

"'This case was further interesting as being one of those operations in the region of the mouth, in which it has been deemed impossible to use ether,—and certainly it would have been impossible to have performed the operation with any complicated inhaling apparatus applied to the mouth of the patient.'"

This paper was afterwards published as a pamphlet, with the title, "Account of a New Anæsthetic Agent, as a Substitute for Sulphuric Ether, in Surgery and Midwifery." It is inscribed to "M. I. Dumas, Member of the Institute, Dean of the Faculty of Sciences, Paris," and bears the motto, from Bacon, "I esteem it the office of a Physician not only to restore health, but to mitigate pain and dolours." The pamphlet caused a great sensation. Four thousand copies were sold in a few days, and many thousands afterwards. It is still asked for.

The three objects Dr. Simpson had set before him at the outset of his medical career—bread, name, and fame—were now secured. He had accomplished much good work, whose fruits would continue associated with his name throughout the ages. He had made a discovery, which, in itself, gave him a claim to one of the highest places among the great and wise of all countries and of all times.

In a note to the communication to the Medico-Chirurgical Society reference is made to Mr. Waldie, Liverpool. He wrote at the time of the publication of the pamphlet to the same :—

"My dear Sir,—I send you the first of the enclosed papers which I have myself sent off. My wife sent two yesterday—one, I think, to Dr. Petrie. I am sure you will be delighted to see part of the good results of our hasty conversation. I think I will get hold yet of some greater things in the same way.

"I had the chloroform for several days in the house before trying it, as, after seeing it such a heavy unvolatile-like liquid, I despaired of it, and went on dreaming about others.

"The first night we took it Dr. Duncan, Dr. Keith, and I all tried it simultaneously, and were all 'under the table' in a minute or two.

"I write in great haste, as I wish to scribble off several letters.

"Be so good as say what you think may be the ultimate selling price of an ounce of it? Duncan and Flockhart charge 3s. for the ounce.

"There has been a great demand for the pamphlet yesterday at the booksellers' here.—Yours very truly,

"J. Y. Simpson.

"Edinburgh, 14*th November* 1847.

"*P.S.*—By the bye, Imlach tells me Dr. P. is to enlighten your medical society about the 'morality' of the practice. I have a great itching to run up and pound him. *When* is the meeting?

"The true moral question is, 'Is a practitioner justified by *any* principles of humanity in not using it?' I believe every operation without it is just a piece of the most deliberate and cold-blooded *cruelty*.

"He will be at the primary curse, no doubt. But the word translated 'sorrow' is truly 'labour,' 'toil;' and in the very next verse the very same word means this.

"Adam was to eat of the ground with 'sorrow.' That does not mean *physical* pain, and it was cursed to bear 'thorns and thistles,' which we pull up without dreaming that it is a sin.

"God promises repeatedly to take off the two curses on women and on the ground, if the Israelites kept their covenant. See Deut. vii. 13, etc. etc. See also Isaiah xxviii. 23; extirpation of the 'thorns and thistles' of the first curse said to come from God.

"Besides, Christ in dying 'surely hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows,' and removed 'the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.' His mission was to introduce mercy, not sacrifice.

"Go up and refute him if I don't come."

Communications of great interest soon reached him. Professor Miller forwarded the following note from Liston, and later a memorandum of another interesting and difficult case :—

"*November* 17*th*, 1847.

"My dear Miller,—The 'chloroform' is a vast advance upon ether. I have tried it with perfect success. You must have an affair to administer it. It is not bigger than the snuff-box you were wont to carry. Simpson deserves all laudation. —Thine always, R. L."

Communications of a different sort gave Dr. Simpson great pleasure, as indicating the cordial way in which his discovery was welcomed in influential circles. Two of these are given —one from the Duchess of Argyll, which does the highest honour to the writer, and indicates truly noble qualities both of head and heart. The other is from Lord Blantyre :—

"Roseneath, *November* 27.

"Dear Dr. Simpson,—I cannot resist writing one line to wish you joy of your discovery. I think your life must be a very happy one from the relief of *not* witnessing pain, which it must be as painful to see as to bear. May all blessing and success attend you. I think you *should* have warned Mrs. Simpson before you tried the chloroform! The Duke joins me in congratulating you.

"I hope my Mull lady is by this time under instruction.—Ever yours, obliged and truly, E. ARGYLL."

"ERSKINE, 19*th December* 1847.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I should be glad to keep a bottle of chloroform in the house to give to people in any bad accident, while being operated on or removed to the infirmary. I could also give a bottle to our *village Doctor*,[1] who has to attend bad accidents in the mills, etc. He is a sensible man, and not young. Before doing so I wish to know if you would dislike my doing so; and you will be right to veto it if you think there is any risk of bringing the chloroform into disrepute, before it is well established, by a bad use of it. But it seems to me little to be feared. If you allow us to use it, pray desire Duncan and Flockhart to send me two bottles (perhaps a pint each), with directions for use. I have read the pamphlets with interest. I never could realize any religious objections. The chloroform has been discovered through no occult science; it is a parallel discovery with vaccination, etc., though a still greater boon, because more universal. It is used with thankfulness, and not in opposition to God.—Yours very sincerely,

"BLANTYRE."

There are also among his papers a great number of letters from practitioners; many of them, of much value, from distinguished men of science:—

DR. (NOW SIR ROBERT) CHRISTISON TO DR. SIMPSON.

"40 MORAY PLACE, *Saturday*, 4 *Dec.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am going to send off a letter to Dumas, giving him a summary of the doings in chloroform since he left

[1] It soon found its way to villages, where its use was guarded with praiseworthy care. When on an antiquarian excursion to K., Dr. Simpson's youngest son, who accompanied him, had an attack of toothache. Going into the druggist's shop, kept by a lady, Dr. S. asked for a little chloroform, but the gentle dispenser said, "Na, na; we dinna sell chloroform to folk that kens naething aboot it."

us. Most of it is written, and I hope to finish it to-day, and despatch it to-morrow.

"Am I right in saying that you have yourself used it in private or at the Maternity in twenty-nine cases?

"I was knocked up early this morning to see ——, assistant-surgeon of the ——. He was to have dined with us on Thursday. When I first saw him yesterday I found he had been three days ill—a very interesting case. . . . I took chloroform with me. In fifteen seconds the hiccup, which had been incessant for five hours, ceased at once: after a little spasm of the arms, and a few ugly mouths, he fell into a soft sleep. . . . Unluckily, however, I had not enough to go on with it. Delirious rambling succeeded for an hour, and I left him at half-past six, still talking comically. . . . In his delirium he asked, 'Who was Anæsthesius? What had he to do with it? I know Dumas was concerned with the discovery; but what business had Anæsthesius with it?' I told him I should ask you. Poor fellow! he is terribly ill, and I have but faint hopes of his recovery. But there could be no question of the temporary relief he obtained from the chloroform. . . . I am yours most truly, R. CHRISTISON."

DR. GEORGE JOHNSTON TO DR. SIMPSON.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I write this note to thank you for the kind attentions I received from you on my late visit to Edinburgh. I hope to avail myself of the information I received. I have no words to express the delight I still feel in thinking of the quantity of suffering the poor woman in the hospital was saved by your means. I trust she goes on well. Accept of my sincere thanks, and believe me, with great respect, yours very truly, GEORGE JOHNSTON.

"BERWICK-ON-TWEED, *December 5th*, 1847."

MR. LAWRENCE TO DR. SIMPSON.

"WHITEHALL PLACE, *Dec. 8th*, 1847.

"DEAR SIR,—Accept my best thanks for your account of

a new anæsthetic agent, as well as for former obliging presents of your valuable contributions to the advancement of medical science and practice. We had tried chloric ether at St. Bartholomew's, and found that although it possessed the advantage of being unirritating to the respiratory passages, it was not sufficiently powerful. Mixed with sulphuric ether in equal quantities, it answered very well. As soon as we heard of the chloroform, which I suppose to be the active part of chloric ether, we immediately made trial of it.

"The result of our experience is that it is preferable to sulphuric ether, although there is no considerable difference of effect. It does not irritate the bronchial membrane; it acts rather more quickly, and the effect is more lasting than that of the sulphuric ether. Struggling to a greater or less extent, but not to an inconvenient degree, has been observed in a proportion of the cases. . . . I remain, my dear Sir, yours very faithfully,

"Wm. Lawrence."

The news of the discovery was received in Paris with the greatest interest. Its merits were freely canvassed in the French schools of medicine, enterprising surgeons hastened to employ it, and the conductors of the medical journals devoted leading articles to it, in some instances claiming for M. Flourens and France the honour of the discovery.

"Lorsque *L'Union Médicale*," dit docteur G. Richelot, gérant, "dans les premiers jours du mois de janvier dernier, signalait la première à l'attention du corps médical de France les remarquables effest des inhalations éthérées, qui pouvait prévoir qu'avant la fin de l'année, l'éther, à peine en possession de l'heureux privilége d'enlever à la chirurgie ses affreuses et inutiles tortures, se verrait détrôné peut-être par une substance encore plus bienfaisante? Une découverte produit sur l'intelligence humaine l'effet du choc de l'acier sur le silex: de nouvelles découvertes lui succèdent avec la rapidité de l'éclair.

"M. le professeur Simpson, d'Édimbourg, dont nous avons déjà souvent enrégistré les intéressants travaux, après des essais nombreux, poursuivis avec autant de zèle que de succès, vient de mettre en évidence un fait d'une grande importance, mais déjà constaté en France par M. Flourens, c'est la propriété anesthésique du *perchlorure de formyle* ou *chloroforme*. . . . Avant de publier sa découverte, M. Simpson a observé avec soin les effets du nouvel agent anesthésique dans des cas nombreux et variés : avulsions des dents, ouvertures d'abcès, traitement de l'hydropisie enkystée de l'ovaire par la galvano-puncture, accouchemens, opérations chirurgicales plus ou moins graves ; il l'a même administré avec succès dans des cas de névralgie et pour faire cesser les souffrances de la dysménorrhée. Par le hasard le plus heureux, M. le professeur Dumas se trouvait à Édimbourg à l'époque où ont été pratiquées les premières opérations chirurgicales dans lesquelles on ait eu recours publiquement aux inspirations de chloroforme. Ces faits en acquièrent un plus grand degré d'authenticité ; et, comme le dit M. Simpson, M. le professeur Dumas n'a pu voir sans un vif intérêt les merveilleux effets d'une substance à l'histoire chimique de laquelle son nom se trouve si intimement attaché. Ces opérations ont été pratiquées dans l'infirmerie royale d'Édimbourg."

The objections to the use of chloroform in some of these communications soon assumed a formidable attitude, and had to be dealt with. Both in this country and in America, earnest attempts were made to rob him of the honour and merit of the discovery. He was thus put on his defence. In his papers on Ether he had shown a determination to compel the acknowledgment of the soundness of his views, and a sturdy resolution to give adversaries no quarter. These qualities were even more apparent in his advocacy of chloroform. A paper in opposition, by Dr. P., surgeon, Liverpool, has been referred to. It was read to the Liverpool Medical Society in November 1847. He regarded the question as "A Branch of

Medical Ethics," and argued against the use of Anæsthetics on the moral ground alone. I notice this paper chiefly, because it gave definite expression to views floating hazily in a not uninfluential class of medical minds,—a class whose influence over patients Dr. Simpson most dreaded. Though not named in after discussions, it was evidently the cause of many of his statements. Dr. P. said,—"I became increasingly aware that I must trench upon what might really appear to be exclusively the province of the divine; but in which, nevertheless, in our professional standing, and in the standing of baptized men as opposed to heathens, we must assuredly have our place, and that a most important one. . . .

"When I was in Edinburgh during the last month, I had several conversations with Professor Simpson, and found that he advocated most strongly its use, not as the *exception*, but as the *rule*. . . .

"I contend that we violate the boundaries of a most noble profession when, in our capacity as medical men, we urge or seduce our fellow-creatures, for the sake of avoiding pain alone —pain unconnected with danger,—to pass into a state of existence the *secrets* of which we know so little at present. I say *secrets*, because from the dark chambers of that existence we have as yet had presented to us but fitful and indistinct gleamings, and these so little to encourage the gaze of a thoughtful and modest eye, that I should be sorry indeed to expose any human being unnecessarily—much less one whom I esteemed or loved—to influences whose nature I more than suspect.

"What *right* have we, even as men, to say to our brother-man, 'Sacrifice thy manhood,—let go thy hold upon that noble capacity of thought and reason with which thy God hath endowed thee, and become a trembling coward before the presence of mere bodily pain'?

"What *right* still less have we, as *baptized* men—men having a Redeemer, and gifted with the Holy Spirit to be our

Comforter,—what right have we, ungratefully or unbelievingly, to *forget* all this, and be willing to go under the deep stupor of a *power* the influences of which, and connected with which, we know so exceedingly little? I must confess that I view with sincere pain, and no little instinctive shrinking of my spiritual being, this *exhibition* of our nature,—this willingness to let our existence drive whithersoever it listeth, at the humour of any experimenter on her track. . . .

"In connexion with this part of the subject, I was struck with a remark in Professor Simpson's last pamphlet, where it is said 'that patients themselves will force this remedy upon us.' Now, I ask, is not this a mark of disorder? Are they to be suffered for a moment to decide upon such a subject? and are *we* to be influenced to give up our judgment and place because they may forsake theirs? I make these remarks in no ungracious feeling towards Professor Simpson; on the contrary, I admire his professional talents greatly, and am much indebted to him for his kindness to me when in Edinburgh. I think, moreover, considering the fascinating nature of the remedy I have been speaking of—rendered still more acceptable and pleasant to the taker of it by the recent discovery of chloroform by him,—and bearing in mind also that we grasp readily in our terror of pain at almost any measure of relief, I think the Doctor may prove too true a prophet, and I fear much that in the end many patients *will* take the law into their own hands secretly or more openly. . . .

"I have said nothing upon the natural or physical merits of this preparation; *that* has yet to be determined by time; but I cannot help suggesting to those who recommend it so indiscriminately, how they would feel in the event of *death* being clearly traced to its use in an ordinary labour, or during or after some surgical operation, when it was employed merely to relieve pain, and when there was no dangerous disease. If *one* death took place out of every 500, and that one was caused by the remedy, would it not be something to meditate upon?

Besides, we have as yet had no time to watch *other* consequences; but one, I fear, in particular, will become more common,—I mean *insanity*. I wish I may be mistaken, but I greatly fear it."

Neither the logic of the paper nor the texts of Scripture brought to bear on "this branch of medical ethics," were likely to impress thoughtful practitioners, but the views were stated in a way calculated to influence certain patients to refuse the boon now put within their reach. This Dr. Simpson determined should not be. Like a skilful general, he first carefully surveyed the positions taken up by all sorts of opponents, and then gave himself heartily to the task of, as he said, "shelling them out," in the interests of medical science and of Christian philanthropy. He found the task even more difficult than he had anticipated. There were secret foes as well as open adversaries to be met. This forced him into tactics he would fain have avoided. But how was he to get his case a fair hearing in his

> "Appeal
> To those who, weakly reasoning, strongly feel"?

He could not expect his opponents to enlighten their patients. But he was convinced the majority of patients would welcome the blessing, so soon as they had the merits of the controversy fully and fairly before them. There were men ever ready "to hint a doubt and hesitate dislike," "to shoot out the lip and shake the head," so long as patients could not study the matter for themselves. It was not to his taste to enter into professional details in public discussions. But, in the case on hand, he took patients into his counsel, wrote his papers in a style and in terms plain to the uninitiated, and appealed to facts in every way fitted to move their sympathies and to carry their convictions. It was afterwards urged as a complaint against him, that he "told the public what the profession alone should have known." "Of Dr. Collins's objections about your writings being too popular," wrote Dr. Montgomery, of Dublin,

"I really know nothing. . . . But one thing I certainly know as a fact, that the pamphlets on anæsthesia or chloroform have been most industriously circulated through every class in this city (at whose suggestion, or whether at any one's suggestion, I know nothing), in which pamphlets many things are submitted to the perusal of the public which in my judgment were better withheld." But if there was blame here, at whose door did it lie?

Dr. Simpson saw from the outset, that if the use of chloroform was to bring to man all the blessing he associated with it, it fell to him to free it from suspicion, and set it above controversy. To this he now gave himself, with all that singleness of heart, concentration of mind, and wonderful energy that leaped into action whenever the interests of humanity were at stake. No sacrifice of ease was grudged; no stone was left unturned. His skill as a scientific physician, his extensive reading in the literature of his own and other departments of medicine, his mastery of true methods of historical criticism, his wide, yet accurate, attainments as an archæologist, his confidence in the value of statistics and his expertness in their use—these were all brought to bear on the views he wished to establish. He had to make good his own claim to the merit of the discovery, to turn aside the opposition of practitioners wedded to old ways of treatment, to deal with the alleged scriptural objections to its employment, to insist on its universal use in the interest of sufferers, and to be able, as the crowning part of a great argument, to point to results in support of his statements. And so he set his face like a flint against all objectors. He resolved to win, and he won.

In establishing his claims, he traced the history of anæsthetics. "Sulphuric ether was first practically adopted for this purpose in 1846 by Dr. Morton, a dentist at Boston, in America. Subsequently Dr. Charles T. Jackson of that city claimed the merit of having suggested it to Dr. Morton as an agent capable of producing insensibility to pain. But the power of producing

by the vapour of sulphuric ether, an insensibility exactly like that produced by the inhalation of nitrous oxide gas, had been long previously known. The fact had been already often published by several American authorities, as by Godwin (1822), Mitchell (1832), Professor Samuel Jackson (1833), Wood and Bache (1834). Richard Pearson was the first to suggest the inhalation of sulphuric ether in medicine in 1795 ; and he then described its employment in some cases of phthisis, asthma, hooping-cough, etc. The sedative effects of its inhalation in these affections have been noticed by almost every author who has written at any length on the Materia Medica during the first half of the present century. In 1816, Mysten proposed and described a special instrument for the inhalation of sulphuric ether. The idea, however, of securing by some artificial means the human body from the pains and tortures inflicted by the knife of the surgeon, is by no means a thought either first broached or first acted upon in recent times. For the production of anæsthesia a variety of measures had been suggested, and some used, long before sulphuric ether and chloroform were applied to this purpose. In 1828, Dr. Hickman appears to have proposed the inhalation of diluted carbonic acid gas as an agent capable of inducing insensibility in surgical operations ; and the anæsthetic properties of carbonic acid have been long known and often witnessed in the experiments constantly performed before travellers on the dogs which are made to breathe this gas in the Grotto del Cane near Naples. In 1800 Sir Humphry Davy threw out a hint as to the possibility of applying nitrous oxide as an anæsthetic. In 1784 Dr. Moore attempted to produce local anæsthesia in limbs requiring amputation or other operations, by previously compressing and obtunding the nerves of the implicated extremity—an idea, however, which was suggested long before Moore's time by Ambrose Paré. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries various authorities, as Valverdi, Hoffmann, etc., suggested the possibility of producing temporary anæsthesia during surgical operations, by a plan

sometimes successfully adopted by modern robbers, viz., by such an amount of 'garrotting,' or compression of the vessels of the neck as would produce the requisite amount of stupor and coma. Some surgeons also proposed to induce before operating a state of fainting, and consequently of insensibility, by a previous profuse blood-letting, etc. The administration of a large opiate has been also repeatedly suggested and tried by various authorities; but the amount of dose required to produce true anæsthesia and insensibility to the pain of a surgical operation was found to be far too large to be free from imminent danger to the life of the patient.

"But at a still earlier date different medicinal agents seem to have been suggested, and practically employed too, for the purpose of producing a state of anæsthesia during surgical operations. These agents were sometimes used in the form of odours or vapours, or by inhalation; and sometimes they were administered by the stomach. Two different drugs appear to have been more particularly used at different epochs with the view of inducing insensibility to the agony and torture otherwise following the surgeon's knife, viz. preparations (1.) of Indian hemp (*Cannabis sativa*, var. *Indica*); and (2.) of Mandragora (*Atropa mandragora*).

"The anodyne, ecstatic, and anæsthetic effects of Indian hemp, and of the various preparations made from it, as bang, hachish, etc., have been long known in Africa and Asia. . . . Some high Biblical commentaries maintain that the gall and vinegar or myrrhed wine offered to our Saviour immediately before His crucifixion was a preparation, in all probability, of hemp, which was in these, as well as in later times, occasionally given to criminals before punishment or execution; while 700 years previously it is possibly spoken of, according to the same authorities, by the prophet Amos as the 'wine of the condemned.' . . .

"The other plant mentioned—the Mandragora—is now vanished from the materia medica, but its therapeutic virtues

certainly seem to call for some renewed investigation. Most of the old Greek and Roman physicians and writers, such as Galen, Aretæus, Celsus, etc., ascribe to it strong soporific powers; and several of them, but especially Dioscorides, Pliny, and Apuleius, describe its decoction or tincture as endowed with such anæsthetic powers that those drinking a proper dose of it are insensible to the pains of the surgeon's knife and cautery. 'It is given,' writes Dioscorides eighteen centuries ago, 'to cause insensibility (*ποιεῖν ἀναισθησίαν*) in those who are to be cut or cauterized, for being thrown into a deep sleep they do not perceive pain.' The observations of Pliny, Apuleius, etc., are to the same effect. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Hugo of Lucca used, and his pupil Theodoric (who died in 1298) has described, a somniferous ball or sponge, 'Spongio somnifera,' the vapours raised from which were capable, when inhaled, of setting patients into an anæsthetic sleep during surgical operations. This somniferous ball was, in the first instance, made by filling and imbibing a sponge with dried extracts of mandragora, opium, and other sedatives; and when required for use the sponge was dipped for a time in hot water, and the patient made to breathe the vapour thus raised from it till an anæsthetic sleep was produced. A modern French surgeon, M. Dauriol, states that he has successfully induced a state of anæsthesia in various surgical patients by the means described 600 years ago by Theodoric. Why the mandragora fell into disuse as an anæsthetic agent in surgery does not appear in any professional records. . . .

"The older authors do not always give explicit accounts of the substances and preparations which they recommend for use as anæsthetic agents. Occasionally they affect an air of secrecy and mystery with regard to their composition and character. Thus, in the eighth book of his Natural Magic (1608), Baptista Porta gives various recipes for medicines which produce sleep, insanity, etc. Amongst others he describes a 'sleeping apple' (*pomum somnificum*), made with mandragora, opium,

etc., and the smelling of which binds, he avers, the eyes with a deep sleep. Subsequently he states that there can be extracted from soporific plants 'a quintessence which must be kept in leaden vessels, very closely stopped, that it may not have the least vent, lest it fly out. When,' he continues, 'you would use it, uncover it, and hold it to a sleeping man's nostrils, whose breath will suck up this subtle essence, which will so besiege the castle of his senses that he will be overwhelmed with a most profound sleep, not to be shook off without much labour. After sleep no heaviness will remain in his head, nor any suspicion of art. These things,' Porta adds, 'are manifest to a wise physician; to a wicked one obscure.' Meissner relates, with considerable detail, that towards the close of the seventeenth century, a secret remedy was exhibited by Weiss to Augustus II. of Poland, while his Majesty was asleep, and during the state of anæsthesia thus induced the King's diseased foot was amputated. The operation was done without the royal patient's consent, and its performance was not discovered by him till the following morning.

"The former general belief in the idea that a degree of anæsthetic and prolonged sleep could be induced artificially by certain medicated potions and preparations,[1] is shown by the frequency with which the circumstance is alluded to by our older poets and story-tellers, and made part of the machinery in the popular romance and drama. In the history of Taliesin (one of the antique Welsh tales, contained in the Mabinogion), Rhun is described as having set the maid of the wife of Elphin into a deep sleep with a powder put into her drink, and as

[1] Jocelyn, in his Life of St. Kentigern or St. Mungo of Glasgow,—a biography written about the year 1180,—speaks of Theneu, the saint's mother, having probably had given to her a lethargic or anæsthetic potion at the time of her professedly unknown impregnation. The passage is remarkable. I quote it in the original monkish Latin:—"Constat nobis sumpto potu oblivionis quam phisici letaragion vocant, obdormisse; et in membris incisionem, et aliquociens adustionem, et in vitalibus abrasionem perpersos, minime sensisse: et post somni excursionem, quæ erga sese aditata fuerant ignorasse."—(*Vitæ Antiquæ Sanctorum Scotiæ*, p. 200.)

having then cut off one of her fingers when she was in this state of artificial anæsthesia.

"Shakespeare, besides alluding more than once to the soporific property of mandragora, describes with graphic power in Romeo and Juliet, and in Cymbeline, the imagined effects of subtle distilled potions, supposed capable of inducing, without danger, a prolonged state of death-like sleep or lethargy. And Middleton, in his tragedy of 'Women, beware Women,' published in 1657, pointedly and directly alludes, in the following lines, to the practice of anæsthesia in ancient surgery:—

> 'I'll imitate the pities of old surgeons
> To this lost limb—who, ere they show their art,
> Cast one asleep, then cut the deseased part.'

Indeed, the whole past history of anæsthetics is interesting, as a remarkable illustration of the acknowledged fact, that science has sometimes for a long season altogether lost sight of great practical thoughts, from being unprovided with proper means and instruments for carrying out these thoughts into practical execution; and hence it ever and anon occurs, that a supposed modern discovery is only the re-discovery of a principle already sufficiently known to other ages, or to other remote nations of men."

Dr. Glover of Newcastle was the first to lay claim to priority in the use of chloroform as an anæsthetic. But his claim was very quickly disposed of:—

"Edinburgh, 52 Queen Street, 3*d December* 1847.

"Dear Sir,—I have been very busy during the last couple of weeks, and very unwell to boot, with the prevailing influenza; otherwise you might have heard from me sooner. Besides, I was anxious you should have time to calm down before I wrote you.

"In your note of November 14, you observe (and I quote your own words, italicized in your own manner)—'I have just read your pamphlet on Chloroform, and could hardly believe my eyes, when I found that you had not taken the least notice

of my *laborious* researches on the chloride, bromide, and iodide of olefiant gas, on chloroform, bromoform, and iodoform (published five years ago), in what purported to be a history of all that was known with regard to the physiological properties of those bodies. I observed this power of producing narcotism, and in one experiment, even the insensibility of the animal to pain (experiment 64th), and called attention to the remarkable properties of these bodies generally.'

"In answer to these observations, I have the two following remarks to make:—

"1. I was most innocently ignorant of your ever having written one word on chloroform, or aught allied to it. I have no pretensions whatever, it is true, to be deeply learned in the literature of Materia Medica or Toxicology, but I find on talking over your letter with some professed therapeutists and chemists here, that they were just as ignorant of your paper as I was. I am not aware of your remarks being mentioned in any one work on Chemistry, Materia Medica, or Toxicology.

"But 2. If I had known your paper, I am not at all sure that I would have quoted it in such a pamphlet as that which you allude to. For in it I do not profess to give the whole therapeutic and toxicological history of chloroform. *I was engaged with its anæsthetic properties, as produced by inhalation.* . . .

"I suppose you build your alleged claim of having discovered the anæsthetic properties of chloroform on the sentence,—'No motion could be excited by pricking or pinching the limbs.' But assuredly you do not make one single observation to show whether their want of motion was the result of the paralysis of motion, or of the paralysis of sensation. In your concluding summary and remarks you do *not* even *allude* to this want of motion or sensation as having been observed. And I dare say you did not, for the simple reason that you were perfectly aware, that narcotic and narcotico-acrid poisons in fatal doses would before death produce the same results.

"Altogether, you poisoned and half-poisoned several animals by injecting chloroform into their blood-vessels, stomach, and peritoneum, but surely this has nothing to do with the anæsthetic effects of chloroform as inhaled by the lungs. . . .

"If you look again at my pamphlet you will find that I there stated that I had tried the chloride of olefiant gas (Dutch liquid). For my pains I only got a headache, and a feeling of constriction at the throat, which was troublesome even next day at lecture. I experimented both on an old specimen of Dutch liquid which belonged to Dr. Hope, and a new one made for the purpose and given me by Messrs. Duncan and Flockhart.

"On the first occasion on which I detected the anæsthetic effects of chloroform, the scene was an odd one. I had had the chloroform beside me for several days, but it seemed so unlikely a liquid to produce results of any kind, that it was laid aside, and on searching for another object among some loose paper, after coming home very late one night, my hand chanced to fall upon it, and I poured some of the fluid into tumblers before my assistants, Dr. Keith and Dr. Duncan, and myself. Before sitting down to supper, we all inhaled the fluid, and were all 'under the mahogany' in a trice, to my wife's consternation and alarm. In pursuing the inquiry thus rashly, perhaps, begun, I became every day more and more convinced of the superior anæsthetic effects of chloroform, as compared with ether.—Yours faithfully, J. Y. S.

"For Dr. Glover."

The claim to priority urged by Dr. Morton, of Boston, United States, was put more definitely, and continued more persistently. Nor was it so easily met. It became so intimately associated with the controversy between Dr. Morton, and his countryman, Dr. Charles T. Jackson, concerning the first use of sulphuric ether as an anæsthetic, that considerable difficulty was experienced in extricating it from all side issues, and placing it

by itself in the front. When the news reached America that Dr. Simpson had successfully employed chloroform, Dr. Jackson wrote:—

"Boston, *Dec.* 30, 1847.

"Dear Sir,—I thank you cordially for your pamphlet on the use of chloroform as a substitute for sulphuric ether, and for the kind note written in it to me. I rejoice with you in this addition to our knowledge of anæsthetic agents, and shall feel proud of having so distinguished a name as yours associated with mine in this grand work of alleviating human suffering.

"In my first trials of your method, I thought you had used the same article I had experimented with, viz., chloric ether, which I prepared by distillings off proof spirit, from a solution and mixture of chloride of lime (hyperchlorite of lime), but I soon discovered that your fluid contains the radical of that ether, or rather the pure perchloride of Formyle, while mine was an alcoholic solution of it, and therefore did not serve as a substitute for sulphuric ether.

"I have prepared your article, and am now fully convinced, by experimental trials, that your substitute for sulphuric ether is really a new thing, and deserving of very great credit. I am really delighted with it, and have done all in my power to introduce it. My laboratory has been crowded with surgeons and dentists, who are in search of your chloroform, and I have laboured hard to prepare and give it forth to the most eminent men. . . .

"I do not know how well you are informed as to the history of the discovery of etherization, but presume you are aware that I made the discovery that insensibility to pain was effected by the inhalation of sulphuric ether vapour, and that I communicated my discovery to an ignorant dentist of the name of Morton, who, instead of being humbly thankful for this valuable information, endeavoured to appropriate the discovery, and by associating himself with a patent solicitor, forced me to save even half of my discovery by joining in a

patent which I most fully abhor, and which I broke loose from as soon as possible, and declared myself the sole inventor and discoverer, and declared that I would not sustain an abominable and false patent. I appealed to the French Academy of Sciences, and had the whole case laid before that learned body, and I understand that the committee are unanimous in favour of my claims as the sole discoverer. All that Morton did was to act as a mechanical agent in my hands, in the first application of the ether in extraction of a tooth. I had previously ascertained that insensibility to pain was produced by inhalation of the ether vapour, and I took all the responsibility in its application.

"I detest patents in medicine, surgery, or in scientific discoveries, and have never received a cent from sales of patent licenses. On the contrary, I have been put to heavy expenses for advice, in defending myself from the insolent assumptions of Morton and his copartners in the ether trade. I hear that you sent a letter to that Morton, and he makes a great parade of it, and pretends that he has tried your substitute with success, but no one who knows about it believes him. He used sponges which he had saturated previously with sulphuric ether, and he has not, so far as I know, yet seen the chloroform in its pure state.

"I hope you will in no way countenance the absurd and piratical claims of Morton, who is always filling the papers with his absurd advertisements.—Yours respectfully,

"Ch. T. Jackson, M.D."

As I wish to limit the references to the discovery of chloroform chiefly to this chapter, I interrupt the course of this narrative, in order to notice the last earnest attempt made to rob Dr. Simpson of the honour. This occurred when he was extremely ill. But with his wonted energy, power of intellectual concentration, and ready mastery of facts, he grappled in argument with his opponent, and anew put his own claims to the honour of the great discovery on a basis not likely ever to

be disturbed. The first letter is entitled—"Historical Letter on the Introduction of Anæsthetics in Dentistry and Surgery in America, and on their first employment in Midwifery in Great Britain." It was published in the *Medical Times and Gazette*, January 22, 1870. The following extracts indicate the scope of this communication :—

"In the last number of the *Medical Times and Gazette* there is copied the chief portion of a letter published at Boston by Dr. Bigelow, senior, and referring to the history of anæsthetics in America and in this country. Early in this year I forwarded the following communication to Dr. Bigelow in reply :—

"'EDINBURGH, *January* 3, 1870.

"'DEAR SIR,—There has been sent to me from America a Chicago newspaper, containing a letter of yours which is alleged to have been published in a late number of the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*. In this letter you speak of the bestowal upon me, some months ago, by my fellow-townsmen, of the rank of an honorary burgess of Edinburgh ; and you comment, in terms of bitterness, upon the subject, and upon what I said—or rather upon what I did not say—on that occasion. I feel assured that if you or any one else had felt as nervous and timid as I did on rising to address the public meeting which witnessed the presentation, you would not be astonished at anything I did allude to, or did not allude to ; or that I failed in adverting to numerous matters to which I might and ought to have adverted.

"'The *gravamen* of your charge is this :—In his extempore address to me on the occasion in question, the Lord Provost thought fit to allude to some of my professional investigations, and specially to those bearing on Anæsthetics, Acupressure, and Hospitalism. He spoke of the application of *chloroform* to the assuagement of human suffering as among the 'greatest medical discoveries of modern times.' In replying on the spur of the moment to this, among other remarks, I stated simply in a sentence the amount to which chloroform was now used for

anæsthetic purposes, by adverting to the great extent to which it was manufactured by one single firm at the present day. I might, if there had been time, have added evidence of the extent to which it has superseded all previous anæsthetics, by stating the amount of its manufacture by other firms here and elsewhere. But I had many other subjects to advert to besides chloroform, and only a few short minutes within which I was expected to include them all. According, however, to your views, I am very deeply blameable for not taking up a subject which the Lord Provost did not allude to—viz. the history of anæsthesia. You hold that I should have entered, to a greater or less extent, into some historical notice of anæsthetic agents. The history of them has always taken me a full hour in my University lectures; and in these lectures I have year after year paid heartily every due compliment to the most important part borne in the consummation of the practical application of anæsthetics by America, particularly by the cities of Hartford and Boston, and specially by the energy and genius of Dr. Morton. . . .

"'In the way of a climax, you terminate one of the paragraphs in your letter with the statement that I was not the "first man" to inhale a vapour to such an extent as to destroy sensibility. Most certainly I was not; and certainly I never was foolish enough to claim to be so. In the course of my investigations I have, however, experimented upon myself with various vapours, the innocuous or the poisonous effects of which upon the body were previously altogether unknown and unascertained; and I have sometimes suffered in consequence. As a Professor of Therapeutics, you must surely be well aware that the first experiment of breathing a vapour to such an extent as to destroy sensibility was made neither in America nor in our own days. Without adverting to the acknowledged fact that it was accomplished with the vapours driven off from hypnotic vegetable extracts by the older surgeons, from Hugo de Lucca and Theodoric downwards, let me remind you that

Sir Humphry Davy boldly—and notwithstanding he had witnessed occasional deaths in animals from it—made the experiment to which you advert many times upon himself in the last year of the last century with nitrous oxide, and further found that headache and other pains disappeared under its influence.

"'About forty years ago, Faraday in this country, and Godman in America, showed, as the result of their observation and experience, that the effects of the inhalation of the vapour of sulphuric ether were quite similar on the nervous system to those produced by the inhalation of the vapour of nitrous oxide gas—a truth subsequently proved by many pupils in many chemical and other schools in your country, as well as in mine, by their inhalation of ether. Your remarks, as far as I understand them, imply that it is your belief that Dr. Morton was the "first man" of "sufficient courage" to breathe "a vapour" so as to produce a state of anæsthesia. But you must know as well as I do, from the official documents laid before the Senate of the United States, that this is doubtful even as regards the course of matters in America; for it appears in these documents (1st) that Dr. Jackson avers that he breathed with this effect sulphuric ether earlier than Dr. Morton; (2dly) that before Dr. Morton made the ultimate experiment upon himself in 1846, he made it first upon others, and particularly upon his pupil Mr. Spears; and (3dly) that two years previously (or in 1844), Dr. Marcy, of Hartford in Connecticut, had successfully excised a tumour from a man who had been rendered anæsthetic for the purpose by the vapour of sulphuric ether; whilst at that same early date, in the same city, Dr. Horace Wells had extracted teeth from a dozen or more patients rendered insensible by inhaling nitrous oxide gas according to Davy's suggestion.'"

The second letter bears date "April, 1870:"—

"My dear Sir,—A few months ago I saw in an American

general newspaper the gratuitous attack upon me which you had published in the *Boston Medical Journal*, but of which you had forgotten to send me either an intimation or a copy—doubtless from accident and not from intentional discourtesy. Towards the beginning of the present year, I sent, in reply to your groundless accusation, an answer in the form of a letter to yourself; and subsequently I received from you a written note in which you stated you were 'not disposed to pursue the subject further.' In consequence I dismissed the matter entirely from my mind; and I deeply regret, both for your own sake and for the peace and character of our honourable profession, that you have not adhered to your resolution. For I have just received a slip of printed statement, unaccompanied by one word of writing, but drawn up in the form of another letter from you to me, in which you continue the subject in terms perhaps still more bitter and personal than before. On first perusing it, my impression was that it was too querulous in tone and temper to deserve an answer. . . .

"1. *Tendency to confusion from the discovery of chloroform rapidly following that of sulphuric ether.*

"From some communications which I have lately received from America I find that your observations have stirred up there, in some minds, the idea that I have held up the introduction of chloroform as an anæsthetic in Edinburgh to be antecedent, in point of time, to the introduction of sulphuric ether in Boston. I feel sure that you and I will mutually agree that never anything so wild or extravagant was hinted or suggested by either of us. The first case of an anæsthetic operation under sulphuric ether occurred at Boston on the 30th September 1846. The first case of an anæsthetic operation under chloroform occurred at Edinburgh on the 15th November 1847. During the intervening thirteen months I had worked much with sulphuric ether in midwifery, etc.; and some of our surgeons, here and elsewhere, had used it more or

less extensively; but it was not by any means adopted by all. At the same time, you must allow me to remark that the ideas on the subject in your own mind, which have excited you to write, have, it appears to me, become chiefly bewildered and confused in consequence of one thing—namely, of the rapidity with which chloroform thus followed as an anæsthetic after the discovery of sulphuric ether; and in consequence also of the relative practical adaptability and superiority of the former in many respects, leading speedily to its general substitution in Europe, Asia, Australia, etc., for the latter.

"2. *Earliest anæsthetic operations in America, and their connexion with Hartford and Boston.*

"From ancient times anæsthesia in surgery has been attempted by various agents or anæsthetics; but till latterly with very uncertain or equivocal effects. At the present time three kinds of anæsthetics are principally and specially used in practice, viz.:—

"1. *Nitrous oxide gas*, now, I believe, employed extensively in dental surgery, etc., since it was re-introduced a few years ago by Dr. Evans of Paris; but originally suggested by Sir Humphry Davy in 1800, and practically and successfully employed by Dr. Horace Wells in Hartford in 1844.

"2. *Sulphuric ether*, first used by Dr. Morton, at Boston, in 1846.

"3. *Chloroform*, first employed in Edinburgh in 1847.

"There have been latterly used, also, from time to time, various minor anæsthetic agents, but none of them, I believe, to any great practical extent; though in all likelihood, some will yet be discovered of types superior to any we as yet know. In my former letter to you, and on different other occasions, I have, with other writers, shown that the ancient surgeons—Mediæval, Roman, and Greek—were long employed in the search after surgical anæsthetics, and so far succeeded, by mak-

ing their patients inhale the fumes of narcotic vegetable extracts, drink solutions of them, etc. etc. Apparently afraid that the history and uses of these olden surgical anæsthetics would detract from the merit of the Medical School of Boston in the discovery of the anæsthetic properties of sulphuric ether, you bitterly denounce in your letter to me the study and consideration of them. Rest assured that no wishes or declamations, either on your part or mine, will wash out or obliterate that or any other points of the past history of surgery. 'I did not desire,' you exclaim, 'to provoke this mediæval history.' But was not your *sole* cause of complaint against me this—that in speaking to the Town Council of Edinburgh one or two sentences regarding chloroform, I omitted—most erroneously in your opinion—to refer to, or speak of, the past history of anæsthetics, say for a quarter or half a century backward? 'Your prolix mediæval history,' you again querulously complain, 'is simply irrelevant, and its application illogical.' It is in no degree illogical; but I believe that it would have been quite irrelevant if brought before the Town Council of my native city. My letter to you, as you further again bitterly observe, is 'occupied with a cloud of antiquarian dust, of which the only apparent result is to obscure the truth and create a confusion in the mind of the readers, in the midst of which chloroform may be advantageously introduced.' Surely, my dear sir, this undignified and calumnious sentence is unworthy alike of the heart and of the pen of Dr. Jacob Bigelow, and requires no answer from me. . . .

"A short and adequate experience of a dozen or more cases soon satisfied Dr. Horace Wells and others that teeth could in this way be extracted without pain, however much trouble there might be in preparing and applying the gas with the imperfect means then in existence. His affidavits of its success are unchallengeable. His friend Dr. Riggs drew six teeth from one patient, at one sitting, without any suffering whatever. During this time also, he seems to have discovered the great

point which we now know to be so essential in the successful exhibition of nitrous oxide—namely, that it should be breathed as pure as possible, and without any mixture of atmospheric air.

"Elated with his discovery, he in a week or two proceeded to Boston, in order to lay it before the medical faculty there, and show its effects. He first made it known there—according to his own account—to Drs. Warren, Heyward, Jackson, and Morton, the last gentleman being a former pupil and partner of his own, and destined to be the future discoverer of anæsthesia by sulphuric ether. . . .

"But now mark what subsequently occurs. An American dentist works out to its practical results the suggestion published in England half-a-century before by Sir Humphry Davy, and which you seem to wish to efface from anæsthetic records, and he travels a long distance to place the important result before the Medical School at Boston, and some surgeons of the Massachusetts Hospital. There is a slip in the single experiment allowed him. He is spurned and hooted away. In doing this the Medical School of Boston thus delays the whole subject of artificial surgical anæsthesia for a couple of years. Was not the Medical School of Boston then, in your violent language, 'chargeable with the continuance of operative tortures' for that period, much more than Sir Humphry Davy? Did not your school stamp out—and thus prevent for two years more—the 'most beneficent discovery,' to use again your own grandiloquent words, 'which has blessed humanity since primeval days of paradise'? I am using here not my language and logic, but yours. . . .

"3. *Etherization, or Anæsthesia, in Midwifery.*

"The first operations under anæsthetic inhalations in America occurred, therefore, as we have seen in the last section, at Hartford, and not at Boston. In Hartford it was effected by an anæsthetic gas, long before suggested by Sir Humphry Davy. But at Boston you at first retarded, for a time, the whole pro-

gress of anæsthesia, by rejecting the evidence of it offered you by Dr. Horace Wells. For, to quote the words of Dr. Riggs, 'there (in your school) he met with a reception so cold that, after a single imperfect trial of the gas, amidst the sneers of those around him, he left Boston in disgust, and sick at heart at the unfair disposition manifested towards him.' Besides erring in this direction, you must permit me to add that in my opinion some of the Boston physicians have also erred in quite an opposite direction. For, after once making the discovery of the superinduction of anæsthesia by sulphuric ether, you seem inclined to hold that the subsequent merit of everything connected with etherization belongs to Boston, and to Boston exclusively. . . .

"In your last letter you begrudgingly state to me, 'I do not *now* question that you were the first to use ether in labour;' and then you superciliously add, 'but who first introduced anæsthetics in obstetrical practice is a matter of limited importance.' According to the testimony, however, of our late mutual friend, Sir John Forbes, the application of anæsthetics to midwifery involved many more difficult and delicate problems than its mere application to dentistry and surgery. New rules required to be established for its use—the time during which it could be given ascertained—its effects upon the action of the uterus, upon the state of the child, and upon the parturient and puerperal state of the mother, etc., all required to be accurately studied. Would it increase or diminish the tendency to convulsions, hæmorrhage, and various other complications? Moral and religious questions also came to be involved, and required to be duly answered. The Boston patent for the use of sulphuric ether, taken out by Drs. Morton and Jackson, did not, I believe, include its employment in midwifery; and your son, Dr. Henry Bigelow, weeks after its use was first begun, deemed it only 'adapted to operations which were *brief* in their duration, whatever be their severity. Of these the two most striking perhaps are *amputations* and the ex-

traction of *teeth*.' This was published in November. When I saw Mr. Liston in London, during the following Christmas holidays, he expressed to me the opinion that the new anæsthetic would be of special use to him—who was so swift an operator—as he thought, like Dr. Bigelow, it could only be used for a brief time. I went back, however, from this London visit to Edinburgh, bent on testing its applicability to midwifery, and found that it could be safely used for hours, etc. . . .

"You profess to deem it a 'matter of limited importance' who first introduced anæsthetics into midwifery. Perhaps it is so. But you will excuse me adding that at the time of the first application of anæsthesia to obstetrical practice—amidst the hundreds and thousands of practitioners who were then engaged in midwifery in the old and the new world—I happened to be the first who took up the subject and worked out most of the problems connected with it. Any one of these hundreds and thousands might certainly have done the same, but did not do it. . . .

"4. *Alleged neglect of American claims in writing a sketch of the history of Anæsthetics.*

"The chief or only subject of your attack upon me in your first article, was the frivolous allegation that, when last year I received the honorary burgess-ship of Edinburgh, and when I had to speak on various and different topics, I omitted to do justice to your city and to America, by omitting to talk of the discovery of sulphuric ether as an anæsthetic when I was called upon to answer an observation or two of the Lord Provost's on chloroform.[1]

[1] "Lest there be any mistake regarding the grounds or supposed grounds of all the war which you have tried to stir up against me, let me here cite in full the Lord Provost's remarks on chloroform, and my reply to them. The Lord Provost, let me state, was one of the most intelligent and intellectual men of the age, William Chambers, Esq., the well-known author and publisher. His address to me in presenting the burgess ticket was spoken extempore, and I find that his words on chloroform are somewhat differently reported in our three morning journals. The version most favourable for

"In your last letter, following out the same jealous strain of complaint, you argue that, besides the alleged omission in an *impromptu* speech, I was guilty, in an article which I had calmly written upon chloroform in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, of not doing 'justice to the great American discovery.' The article in question was printed in a volume of the *Encyclopædia* for 1854, and has been republished in a second volume of my works, collected and edited by Drs. Priestley and Storer. In that article, after defining chloroform and stating its composition, modes of preparation, physical, chemical, and physiological properties, I have described at length the various therapeutic uses to which it, and consequently any other similar anæsthetic, could be applied in surgery, in midwifery, in medicine, and in medical jurisprudence; and ultimately I have occupied the last three columns of the article by a brief historical sketch of the various anæsthetic agents which have been used previously to the introduction of chloroform. And this historical sketch is the special object of your new attack.

"In giving, in my lectures and otherwise, a history of anæsthetics, I have sometimes traced them from the earliest

you is the one you select—the *Daily Review*—and is as follows:—'I will not dwell on what you have accomplished in medical science. I will only allude to your discovery—the greatest of all discoveries in modern times—of the application of chloroform in the assuagement of human suffering. That was a great gift to mankind at large, and it well befits us, the Corporation of Edinburgh, to mark our sense of the great act of beneficence on your part by this small compliment.' His Lordship subsequently alluded to my writings on Acupressure, Hospitalism, etc. etc.

"With regard to the observations on chloroform, I replied in the two following sentences:—'You adverted to the discovery of anæsthetic effects of chloroform. Perhaps you will allow me to state that there are various manufactories of it in Great Britain, and that a single one of these, located in Edinburgh, makes as many as eight thousand doses a day, or between two million and three million of doses every year—evidence to what a great extent the practice is now carried of wrapping men, women, and children in a painless sleep during some of the most trying moments and hours of human existence; and especially when our frail brother-man is laid upon the operating-table, and subjected to the tortures of the surgeon's knives and scalpels, his saws and his canteries.'—(See *Journal of the Gynæcological Society of Boston*, No. 6, p. 370.)

known periods downwards to the present day; but more frequently I have followed the *inverse* order, because I have found it more instructive and interesting—viz., that of tracing them gradually backwards from their most recent to their most ancient form. I have followed this last method in the said article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and have hence first mentioned chloroform as then the most recent anæsthetic in the two following lines:—'The vapour of chloroform was first proposed by Dr. Simpson as an anæsthetic agent in 1847.' . . .

"But then comes your other accusation, that in enumerating the different methods of producing anæsthesia I have adduced chloroform *first*, sulphuric ether *second*, carbonic acid *third*, nitrous oxide *fourth*, etc., to 'cover'—to use your own reprehensible words—'this inversion of historical order in favour of the self-exaltation of the writer . . . who availed himself of this opportunity principally to place himself conspicuously in the foreground.'

"Believe me, I feel difficulty in commenting upon these criticisms of yours; they are essentially so groundless and absurd; and I know them in my own heart to be so utterly untrue. If an American or English schoolboy were asked to give a *retrograde* chronological list of the Presidents of the United States, or the Sovereigns of England, from the present time to the commencement of this century, would he not begin with General Grant and Queen Victoria? According to your logic, however, that would imply 'self-exaltation' on the part of the pupil; and to avoid this he ought to commence with the Presidents Johnson and Lincoln, or King William the Fourth. But would not such a strange historical obliquity and misstatement, if unhappily indulged in, bring down condign punishment and contempt on the disciple? And is there not occasionally truth in the saying that 'sages sometimes do as foolish things as schoolboys'? . . .

"If we try to put into a summarized form the data which

we have been discussing regarding the introduction of anæsthesia in America and this country, it appears to me that we might correctly state the whole matter as follows :—

"1. That on the 11th December 1844, Dr. Wells had, at Hartford, by his own desire and suggestion, one of his upper molar teeth extracted without any pain, in consequence of his having deeply breathed nitrous oxide gas for the purpose, as suggested nearly half-a-century before by Sir Humphry Davy.

"2. That after having with others proved, in a limited series of cases, the anæsthetic powers of nitrous oxide gas, Dr. Wells proceeded to Boston to lay his discovery before the Medical School and Hospital there, but was unsuccessful in the single attempt which he made, in consequence of the gas-bag being removed too soon, and that he was hooted away by his audience, as if the whole matter were an imposition, and was totally discouraged.

"3. That Dr. Wells's former pupil and partner, Dr. Morton of Boston, was present with Dr. Wells when he made his experiments there.

"4. That on the 30th September 1846, Dr. Morton extracted a tooth without any pain, whilst the patient was breathing sulphuric ether, this fact and discovery of itself making a NEW ERA in anæsthetics and surgery.

"5. That within a few weeks the vapour of sulphuric ether was tried in a number of instances of surgical operations in Boston—Dr. Morton being generally the administrator;—and ether vapour was established as a successful anæsthetic in dentistry and in surgery.

"6. That in January, and the subsequent spring months 1847, the application of sulphuric ether as an anæsthetic in midwifery was introduced, described in our medical journals, and fully established in Edinburgh, before any case with it was tried in Boston or America.

"7. That on the 15th November 1847, the anæsthetic effects of chloroform were discovered in Edinburgh, and that it swiftly

superseded in Scotland and elsewhere the use of sulphuric ether, and extended rapidly and greatly the practice of anæsthesia in surgery, midwifery, etc.

"I am very sorry to have taken up so much of your time and my time with such a petty discussion as the present. It has extended to too great a length; but I am a sad invalid just now, and quite unable to write with the force and brevity required. With many of our profession in America I have the honour of being personally acquainted, and regard their friendship so very highly that I shall not regret this attempt—my last, perhaps—at professional writing as altogether useless on my part, if it tend to fix my name and memory duly in their love and esteem.—Yours very truly."

Before forwarding this letter to America he wrote to his friend Dr. R. H. Storer, of Boston :—

"*9th April* 1870.

"My dear Dr. Storer,—At the time I received the printed slip containing Dr. Bigelow's second letter, I was laid up, in consequence principally of over-fatigue and distant travelling work, with a severe attack of rheumatism in the chest (I have had two attacks of rheumatic fever before), from which I am not likely to recover. Amidst my sickness I have tried to dictate an answer to Dr. Bigelow, which has become far too long in my hands, but I have printed it, and it will be sent to you when the printing of it is completed, by the next mail. I send it through you as my last offering to the Gynæcological Society of Boston, to use as they see fit. The separate copies which will be sent to you, distribute privately, or use them as you think right. Please ask the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* to admit my answer as an antidote to Dr. Bigelow's efforts. There never was a more unjust or unjustifiable attack than this. I know from the utmost depths of my own conscience that I never said or wrote a single word to detract from the mightiness of the discovery of anæsthesia by sulphuric ether

at Boston in 1846. But surely the discovery of another anæsthetic by me, a year afterwards, more powerful, practical, and useful than sulphuric ether, was in itself a fact of no small moment, and tended, I well know, immensely to spread the use of anæsthesia on this side the Atlantic. Perhaps some one, within ten or twenty years, may discover another and better type of anæsthesia than we yet possess. Is a man that does so to be denied all merit, because sulphuric ether was found out to be an excellent, if not perfect, anæsthetic at Boston in 1846? I had no idea of the character and extent of Dr. Wells's merits till I latterly looked over more carefully the official volume of evidence in the matter, published by Dr. Morton. According to the latest London journals, some seem to be adopting nitrous oxide gas for various operations besides tooth-drawing.

"Our Lord Provost Chambers, who made the speech at which Dr. Bigelow cavils so much, has been living in Italy for the last six months, and has just returned to town, and I daresay is startled to find that a sentence of his has given rise to such an unfortunate and petty warfare. My assistant, Dr. Coghill, has just told me that a patient of mine, who has been here from Boston for some months, has received a copy of Dr. Bigelow's letter from America by the last post. I suppose this shows how active some Bostonian physicians are against me in this matter. Surely, in common courtesy, Dr. Bigelow ought to have sent me a proper and authenticated copy. Probably the strife has been fanned, it is suggested to me, by one or two medical men in this city—for there are one or two in our lists who have quarrelled bitterly with me, though I have never quarrelled with them. They are old pupils, who ought to have felt gratitude for what I had done for them; but I have found, what many others have found, that what ought to be deep gratitude, sometimes, and without any apparent cause whatever, becomes deep malignity. I forgive them most heartily all they have done. God has made my life sufficiently successful to a degree

far beyond my deserts, and I have been ever happy in doing the work which He has allotted to me. May He ever prosper you in your work, and hold you under the guidance of His eye!

"With the kindest remembrances to all your friends, believe me, ever yours truly, J. Y. SIMPSON."

In our own country he found that his fears of opposition from practitioners were not exaggerated. In meeting this he set out with the proposition—"Mere opinions and prejudgments are not sufficient to settle the question of the propriety or impropriety of Anæsthetic Agents." This he illustrated by referring to the history of Vaccination. During the latter half of the last century 30,000 individuals were computed to die annually of smallpox in England; but now not more than a third of that number perish from this cause in England and Wales. "If a similar rate of reduction in the number of deaths from smallpox holds good—as we have every reason to believe is the case—in the other kingdoms of Europe, then, out of 220 millions of people that inhabit this quarter of the globe, 400,000 or 500,000 fewer die of smallpox than, with a similar population, would have died from this malady fifty years ago." Yet at the time of Dr. Jenner's first announcement of vaccination, in 1798, the proposal of substituting vaccine for variolous inoculation was encountered by various members of the profession with incredulity and ridicule, and direct and determined opposition. An Anti-Vaccine Society was formed, calling upon the people to suppress this innovation as "a gross violation of religion, morality, law, and humanity." The leaders of the opposition were professional men. "The projects of these vaccinators seem to bid bold defiance to Heaven itself—even to the will of God," said one. "The law of God prohibits the practice; the law of man and the law of nature loudly exclaim against it," cried another. "Every proposed improvement," said Dr. Simpson, "seems to be met with the same invariable array of objections and arguments. The discovery may be new, but

the grounds of opposition to it are not new,—they are merely the old forms of doubt, and difficulty, and prejudice used on former occasions, recalled and reproduced anew. Thus, not only in their leading principles and spirit, but in most even of their minute details, identically the same arguments that forty or fifty years ago were urged against the propriety and safety of vaccination, or a hundred years ago against small-pox inoculation, have within the last few months been again invoked and used against the employment of etherization."

Fully convinced of the value of chloroform in his own department of practice, he laboured to show that it was fitted to bring even greater blessing to the department of Surgery. On the 1st of December 1847 he communicated another paper on the subject to the Medico-Chirurgical Society, and afterwards published it with the following quotations on its title-page—

> "Serve me—as Mandragora—that I may sleep."
>
> WEBSTER'S *Duchess of Malfy.*

> "But there is
> No danger in what show of death it makes,
> More than the locking up the spirits a time,
> To be more fresh, reviving."
>
> SHAKESPEARE'S *Cymbeline.*

The speedy demand for this pamphlet, and the large number of copies sold, again showed the strong and lively interest taken by the public in all that related to chloroform. One or two extracts follow :—

"Among the many improvements by which the operative part of medicine has, from time to time, been enriched, few or none have exerted a more potent, or a more beneficial influence over its advancement and progress than the introduction, in the sixteenth century, of the application of ligatures to arteries, with the object of arresting the hæmorrhage attendant upon surgical wounds and operations. Previously to that time, surgeons had no other means of stemming the flow of blood—after amputation of the limbs, for instance—than by scorching

over the raw and bleeding wound with a red-hot iron, or by plunging it into boiling pitch, or by applying strong potential cauteries to its surface. With laudable efforts to diminish the fearful severities of their practice, they exerted their ingenuity in devising, as it were, refinements upon these necessitous cruelties. Thus Hildanus, the patriarch of German surgery, amputated the limbs of his patients with red-hot knives, in order that he might divide the flesh and sear up the vessels at one and the same time. Upon all these practices, the great and happy suggestion of Ambrose Paré, viz., to shut up the bleeding vessels by constricting or tying them with slender ligatures, was a vast and mighty improvement. It at once made the arrestment of hæmorrhage in operations far more simple, more certain, and more secure. It saved immeasurably the sufferings of the patients, while it added immeasurably to their safety. But the practice was new, and an innovation; and consequently, like all other innovations in medical practice, it was at first, and for long, bitterly decried and denounced. The College of Physicians of Paris attacked Paré for his proposed new practice; they attempted, by the authority of the French Parliament, to suppress the publication and dissemination of his observations: and, for nearly a long century afterwards, some of the Hospital Surgeons of Paris continued, with the characteristic obstinacy of the profession, to prefer cauterizing bleeding arteries 'with *all* the ancients,' rather than simply tie them 'after the manner of a few ignorant and presumptuous moderns.' 'Without' (writes the late Mr. John Bell) —'without reading the books of these old surgeons, it is not possible to imagine the horrors of the cautery, nor how much reason Paré had for upbraiding the surgeons of his own time with their cruelties. . . . The horrors of the patient, and his ungovernable cries, the hurry of the operators and assistants, the sparkling of the (heated) irons, and the hissing of the blood against them, *must* have made terrible scenes; and surgery *must*, in those days, have been a horrid trade.'

"The sentiments which Mr. Bell here expresses are those with which the human mind often *looks back* upon our opinions and practices, when these opinions and practices are past and gone, and have become mere matters of history. In the above, as in many other instances, we never become fully awakened to the cruelty and enormity of some of our established doctrines and doings, until, from time to time, an advance is made in civilisation or science, and we find that this or that doctrine and practice, with all its attendant sufferings and inhumanities, was in reality utterly unnecessary, and utterly uncalled for. In general, however, long years elapse before this new aspect of matters is duly seen; or, at least, duly acknowledged. While the practices themselves are in full operation, the mind, enthralled by education and habit, cannot be easily made to view them in their true character; and when, in the progress of the march of knowledge and science, their propriety and perpetuation come at last to be challenged and contested, human passions and prejudices ever (as in the above instance of cauterization) rise up to argue for, and insist upon, the continuance and safety of the past, and the total impolicy and high peril of any attempted alteration. But time passes on, and brings with it, sometimes abruptly—generally almost imperceptibly—a perfect change of doctrine and practice. Any surgeon who, in the days of Paré, dared to arrest the hæmorrhages from his amputation wounds, by applying ligatures *instead* of red-hot irons, would have been denounced by his compeers. Any surgeon, on the contrary, who now, at this present day, dared to arrest the hæmorrhages from his amputation wounds, by applying to the bleeding vessels, not ligatures but red-hot irons, would as certainly be denounced by his compeers, and his talents, as well as his humanity, would be strongly challenged. We look back with sorrow upon the pitiless practices in that respect of the contemporaries and opponents of Paré. In the course of years our successors in the profession will, I most sincerely believe, look back with

similar feelings upon the alleged 'insignificance,' and 'propriety,' and 'desirability' of pain in surgical operations, as maintained by many members of the profession at the present day; and they will equally marvel at the idea of men—of humane men—complacently confessing and upholding, that they prefer operating upon their patients in a waking instead of an anæsthetic state; and that the fearful agonies which they thus inflict—the agonies of the surgeon's knife—should be endured rather than avoided—quietly and decorously submitted to, and not attempted to be eschewed. I have elsewhere discussed, at some length, the strange opinions and practices of some modern surgeons upon this alleged propriety and necessity of pain in surgical practice and surgical operations. On the present occasion my object is to offer some remarks regarding the pains attendant upon parturition, and the propriety of alleviating and annulling the sufferings of our patients in obstetrical practice and obstetrical operations. . . .

"Is it right for the physician to interfere with these fearful sufferings and agonies in order to save and shield his patients from the endurance of them? Is it proper for him to exercise the skill of his art so as to moderate and remove these 'almost intolerable pains (*fere intolerabiles dolores*')? . . .

"These questions, and questions like these, I have often during the currency of the present year heard complacently put by medical men,—men, too, whose opinions and actions in other matters, and in other respects, were fully and truly actuated by that great principle of emotion which both impels us to feel sympathy at the sight of suffering in any fellow-creature, and at the same time imparts to us delight and gratification in the exercise of any power by which we can mitigate and alleviate that suffering. Such questions, I repeat, are seriously asked by physicians and surgeons, the professed object of whose whole science and art is the relief of human disease and human suffering. They are questions propounded with all imaginable gravity and seriousness by individuals who

(in a mere abstract point of view) would, no doubt, strongly object to being considered as anxious to patronize and abet human misery, or traffic in the perpetuation of human pain. . . .

"All pain is *per se*, and especially when in excess, destructive and even ultimately fatal in its action and effects. It 'exhausts (says Mr. Travers) the principle of life.' 'It exhausts (says Mr. Burns of Glasgow) both the system and the part.' 'Mere pain (observed the late Dr. Gooch) *can* destroy life.'"

Anxious to learn whether the use of chloroform was spreading as rapidly in America as at home, he wrote to his friend Dr. Meigs, Professor of Midwifery, Philadelphia, a letter, in which he reported progress in Britain. In a communication dated Philadelphia, February 18, 1848, Dr. Meigs gave him the information desired, and added :—

"I readily hear, before your voice can reach my ears from beyond the Atlantic, the triumphant reply that an hundred thousand have taken it *without accident*. I am a witness that it is attended with alarming accidents, however rarely. But should I exhibit it to a thousand patients merely to prevent the physiological pain, and *for no other motive*, and should I in consequence destroy only one, the least of them, I should feel disposed to clothe me in sackcloth and cast ashes on my head for the remainder of my days. What sufficient motive have I to risk the life or health of one in a thousand, in a questionable attempt to abrogate one of the generical conditions of man?

"As to the uses of chloroform in the medical or surgical treatment of pain, the question changes. . . .

"I have a far more pleasing duty to perform in saying that your name is become as well known, perhaps, in America as it is in your native land, and in congratulating you upon the extension of your fame.

"I had yesterday the pleasure to read your interesting letter to my class in College, consisting of several hundred young gentlemen, who listened to your words with the same respect as they would have paid had they been pronounced by

your own lips. They will in a few days hence begin to disperse themselves over all the States in this Union, and thus will have it in their power to report the latest date of your opinions as to chloroform. I shall also allow it to be published, with this reply, on the 1st proximo, in the journal called the *Medical Examiner*.

"You will herein perceive the readiness with which I assist in disseminating your views. It is not without regret that I find myself opposed to your authoritative opinion in this special case. Such dissidence ought not, however, in the least degree to affect those sentiments of respectful consideration and of real esteem with which, dear Sir, I am very faithfully, your obliged and obedient servant, CH. D. MEIGS."

The letter of Dr. Meigs appeared, as promised, in the *Medical Examiner*. The high respect which Dr. Simpson had for Dr. Meigs, and his desire to carry the sympathy, and, if possible, secure the co-operation of all intelligent practitioners, led him to write a long letter in answer to his objections. After dealing with these in detail, and bringing much fresh illustration in support of his views, he concludes:—"'Perhaps,' you observe, 'I am cruel in taking so dispassionate a view of the subject.' Of course it would ill become me to press any such judgment on you. But I feel this, that you and I, and other teachers of Midwifery, are placed, in reference to this question, in a position far more fearfully responsible than ordinary medical practitioners. The ordinary obstetric practitioner has little or no power, except over the relief or the perpetuation (according as he may choose it) of his own immediate patients. But you and I, as obstetrical teachers, may, through our pupils, have the power of relieving or continuing the sufferings of whole communities. If, perchance, you persist for some years longer in your present opinion, it will have the effect of inflicting a large amount of what I conscientiously believe and know to be altogether *unnecessary* agony and suffering upon thousands of

our fellow-beings. If you review and alter your opinions, which I earnestly hope you will do, and make yourself sufficiently acquainted with the peculiarities in the mode of action and mode of exhibition of chloroform, a vast proportion of human suffering may, even within the next few years, be saved by your happy instrumentality and influence. . . . If I had to re-write or revise these observations, I would perhaps have stated them with more accuracy; but I must send them as they are; and along with them I beg to send also the most sincere esteem and reiterated respects of, my dear Sir, yours very faithfully, J. Y. S."

There had been a lull for six or eight weeks in the attacks, secret and open, which for some time he had been forced to meet. But the opposition had been gathering strength. The opponents had been nursing their wrath.

TO DR. ASHWELL.

"*March* 11, 1848.

"My dear Doctor,—I have been laid up for the last twenty hours in bed, ill, and quite undone for the time, from breathing and inhaling some vapours I was experimenting upon last night, with a view of obtaining other therapeutic agents to be used by inhalation; and I write in bed. A few hours ago I received the *Lancet*. Your strange paper in it has done me a world of good. I have seen the time when such a scurrilous attack as yours would have irritated me. Now-a-days such things produce the very reverse, so that I fancy I am getting quite hardened. Great abuse and great praise sound to me now very much alike. For I feel that the greater the good I can ever accomplish for my profession and for humanity, the greater will always be the temporary blame attempted to be heaped upon *me* by the bigoted portions of the profession. . . .

"Of course you are aware that it would be quite *infra dig.* in me to reply publicly to such a personal attack as you have chosen to send to the *Lancet*. Nor have I time and strength at present to put you right on all the points you touch. But do steal away for forty-eight hours from London, and take up your

abode with me here (where you will find a comfortable bed, a fork and knife, and a hearty Scotch welcome awaiting you), and I will readily convince you how utterly you are in error on all points. . . .

"In our professional duties omissions and commissions amount to the same crime in principle. And I believe all your reasonings and efforts amount to this 'Red Indian result.' To prolong your medical prejudices, you argue that you and your brethren are entitled to perpetrate medical cruelties and torture on the poor women who commit themselves to your care. To confess to you the truth, my blood feels chilled by the cruel inhumanity and deliberate cruelty which you and some members of the profession openly avow. And I know that you will yet in a few years *look back* with horror at your present resolution of refusing to relieve your patients, merely because you have not yet had time to get rid of some old professional caprices and nonsensical thought upon the subject. . . .

"In the meantime let me allude to one or two of your most prominent errors in the libel alluded to.

"In some particularly absurd remarks in your *P.S.*, in which you seem to doubt the truth of the Bible relation of the sleep of Adam, you say, 'Dr. Simpson surely forgets that the deep sleep of Adam took place before the introduction of pain into the world, during his state of innocence.' Now I will not offend you by comparing the theological opinion of John Calvin with the theological opinion of Samuel Ashwell, but let me ask you one single question: Is it anywhere stated in your Bible that pain came in with sin, or that there was no pain endured when there was no sin? If so, then let me add, *your* Bible differs from mine. . . .

"'Certainly the great discoveries of Robert L. have never exceeded in their enunciation the dignified modesty of true science.' Capital! Does this allude to the fifty alleged cardiac ganglia, which were found by Professors Owen and

Bowman to have no existence? Your remarks and those of a Mr. G. (poor fellow, he is evidently, as we say in Scotland, 'not himself'), in a recent number of the *Lancet*, about me writing in the *Morning Post*, and a number of other deliberate analogous falsehoods, have given me a far higher idea of the importance of the application of anæsthesia than I had before. He says Denman, etc., did not follow such plans. Neither did I. But then the subject is so much more momentous than any Denman, etc., wrote on, that the *public* have taken it up and will force it on you and other recusants. You might as well hope to stem the Thames as to stem it. . . .

"'Unnecessary interference with the providentially arranged process of healthy progression is sure sooner or later to be followed by injurious and fatal consequences.' Hence all the railway accidents and deaths. If you refuse to interfere with a natural function because it is natural—why do you ride, my dear Doctor? you ought to walk, in order to be consistent. Chloroform does nothing but *save pain*, you allege. A carriage does nothing but save fatigue. Which is the more important to get done away with?—*your* fatigue, or your patients' screams and tortures?

"You quote Paul Dubois against me. He is a better man than you take him for. Pigné (Dupuytren's nephew) was here a fortnight ago. He tells me Dubois uses chloroform now constantly.

"I rejoice at such bitter personal attacks and absurd misrepresentations as you and poor G. indulge in, for one reason. It looked as if no one were going to oppose the practice in the way that the *historical* fools, Dr. Rowley, Lipscomb, etc., opposed vaccination, etc., and as I had predicted *would* occur. I have no fears now on this score. For it is quite certain that other Rowleys, etc., will appear now, as of yore, and that my prediction will be true. . . .

"For the infliction of this long letter you are indebted to my sickness.

"In conclusion, let me assure you I feel no anger at your indecent attack. I do feel ashamed for you, but not angry *at* you. Do come north to Edinburgh—see all—and you will find I can pardon all such absurdities as you have committed, and convert you in addition. Do come.—Yours very faithfully,

"J. Y. Simpson."

In this letter Dr. Simpson refers to illness brought on by inhaling vapours, when in search of other anæsthetic agents. A good deal of risk and much discomfort were incurred in the search. When he apprehended danger he was the first to experiment. His butler, Clarke, who had a high opinion of the properties of "chlory," as he called chloroform, found him on one occasion lying in his room, apparently unconscious, and suffering from the effects of a recent experiment. To some friends who were watching him, with a good deal of alarm, the butler remarked,—"He 'll kill himsel' yet wi' thae experiments; an' he 's a big fule, for they 'll never find onything better nor chlory." Though Dr. Simpson was unable to speak at the time, he heard quite distinctly the butler's remark, more graphic than complimentary. But it helped to rouse him.[1]

Towards the end of 1847 Dr. Simpson's attention was repeatedly called, both by patients and practitioners, to the religious objections against the use of chloroform. This led him to publish a third pamphlet, entitled, "Answer to the Religious Objections against the Employment of Anæsthetic Agents in Midwifery." The following texts are placed on the

[1] Among other experiments, Dr. Simpson had got an effervescing drink prepared with chloric ether in aerated water. At a dinner party this was brought forward and tried, pronounced to be very pleasant, but rather heady. The butler took the remains of this new beverage down-stairs and gave it to the cook, saying it was champagne. Shortly after drinking it, she fell on the floor insensible. The butler rushed into the dining-room, saying, "For God's sake, sir, come doun; I 've pushioned the cook." Dr. S. with some others ran down-stairs, and found their patient lying on the floor, snoring heavily. The butler explained that he had given her a glass of "the new champagne chlory." As there was no danger, the incident created a hearty laugh.

title-page :—"For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving."—1st Timothy iv. 4. "Therefore, to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."—James iv. 17. The religious objections were founded chiefly on the words of the primeval curse pronounced on man after the Fall. Dr. Simpson quoted the whole passage, looked at it in the light of other portions of Scripture, examined it critically clause by clause, appealed to the best exegets as authorities for his inferences, and concluded that the religious, like the scientific objections, had no foundation, except in the prejudice or ignorance of those who made them. There is much curious information brought to bear on this question, and evidences of considerable skill in the use of Scripture as self-interpretative. The curse on the serpent and on the ground are reviewed, and the deep sleep brought on Adam is skilfully adduced in support of the practice for which he argued. "Those who urge, on a kind of religious ground, that an artificial or anæsthetic state of unconsciousness should not be induced merely to save frail humanity from the miseries and tortures of bodily pain, forget that we have the greatest of all examples set before us. He follows out this very principle of practice. I allude to that most singular description of the preliminaries and details of the first surgical operation ever performed on man, which is contained in Genesis ii. 21 :—"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept, and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof."

In another part of the pamphlet he says :—"Probably I may be excused adding, that my friend Professor Miller informs me that when reluctantly consenting to write the elaborate article on Etherization, which he afterwards penned for the *North British Review*, he stated to Dr. Chalmers, who solicited him to undertake the task, 'that if he wrote the Medical, Dr. Chalmers should himself write the Theological part.' Dr. Chalmers at once professed that he did not see any theological

part pertaining to it. Mr. Miller then explained to him that some had been urging objections against the use of anæsthesia in Midwifery, on the ground of it so far improperly enabling women to avoid one part of the primeval curse. At last, when Mr. Miller was enabled to convince him that he was in earnest in saying that such ground had been taken, Dr. Chalmers thought quietly for a minute or two, and then added, that if some 'small theologians' really took such an improper view of the subject, he should certainly advise Mr. Miller 'not to heed them' in the article. Dr. Chalmers's mind was not one that could take up or harbour the extraordinary idea that, under the Christian dispensation, the God of mercy should wish for or delight in the sacrifice of woman's screams and sufferings in childbirth. Perhaps he thought also, as I have heard other clergymen state, that if God has beneficently vouchsafed to us a means of mitigating the agonies of childbirth, it is His evident intention that we should employ these means. The very fact that we have the power by human means to relieve the material sufferings, is in itself a sufficient criterion that God would rather that these sufferings be relieved and removed. If He had willed and desired them not to be averted, it would not be possible for man to avert them. For while it is our duty to avoid all misery and suffering that is avoidable, it would certainly be impossible for us to eschew any that God had permanently and irreversibly decreed should not be eschewed." Later, Dr. Simpson reiterated these views, and urged others on the same side, illustrated by fresh facts, and enforced by new considerations, in an able letter to Dr. Protheroe Smith. His arguments were conclusive. The religious objections were seldom heard of afterwards. Both patients and practitioners became ashamed of them. But he soon found how much need there had been for all the labour, anxiety, and time he had devoted to this subject. Professional friends, whom he had thought least likely to yield to such views, thanked him for the relief they had got by this pamphlet.

And letters reached him from India, China, and America, as well as from different parts of Britain, written in the same strain.

Numerous communications from patients, many of whom moved in the highest circles of Britain, gave him much gratification, as showing how readily they had accepted the great boon.

"I like much," said one lady, "the arguments you use, in answer to the religious doubts of the *faint-hearted,* more especially that in paragraph 5. I hardly think there can be any lady so foolish now as to refuse the aid of chloroform."

"I am very sorry," wrote another noble lady, "to find you have been so great a sufferer from this terrible influenza. I trust it is over now, and that you will have no more returns of it. Many thanks for the pamphlets, and the one on the *religious* view of the use of chloroform, etc., is *most* interesting. Had it been my happy lot to have been one of your patients under these circumstances, I do not think I should have troubled you with many objections to its use. What a blessing you have been the means of conferring on poor suffering *woman* by this discovery, and I hope all scruples about the propriety of its use may speedily vanish. There is an admirable article upon your pamphlets which I have also just been reading in the *Scotsman* of Saturday. I am *rejoiced* that you have answered *in print* the objections which have been raised on religious grounds, for I was very anxious you should do so."

FROM THE DUCHESS OF ARGYLL.

"My dear Sir,—I am very grateful to you for all your kindness about your Mull pupil, and very glad to receive your most interesting pamphlets. . . . I have given chloroform to our Dr. here and at Inverary, and they both intend using it.

"It must make you very happy, dear sir, to have discovered so great a blessing. Next to the cure of souls, there can be no more wonderful blessing bestowed on man than to have been

allowed the possession of such a 'gift of healing.' May the Giver of all good gifts long give you strength and health for the comfort of so many, and for your own happiness!

"The Duke's best regards, and believe me, very truly yours,

"ELIZABETH ARGYLL.

"ROSENEATH, *Jan. 24th.*"

But few of these letters gave him such deep and pure pleasure as one spontaneously offered to him by a colleague, who knew better than most men the meaning of "the much tribulation," and, better still, the import of the words, "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope." Dr. George Wilson describes his own feelings when in the hands of the surgeons. In his case, as in others, "the operation was necessarily slow; and chloroform—one of God's best gifts to His suffering children—was then unknown."[1]

The letter is entitled, "Anæsthetics in Surgery, from a Patient's point of View."

"MY DEAR DR. SIMPSON,—I have recently read, with mingled sadness and surprise, the declarations of some surgeons that anæsthetics are needless luxuries, and that unendurable agony is the best of tonics. Those surgeons, I think, can scarcely have been patients of their brother surgeons, and jest at scars only because they never felt a wound; but if they remain enemies of anæsthetics after what you have written, I despair of convincing them of their utility. My present object in writing is not to supplement your arguments in favour of the administration of anæsthetics to those who are about to undergo surgical operations; but, as one who knows from personal experience what operations were to the patients before ether or chloroform was employed anæsthetically, I am anxious to state certain reasons in justification of their use, which only those who suffered without their help are in a condition to urge.

"Several years ago, I was required to prepare, on very short

[1] *Horæ Subsecivæ*, p. 377.

warning, for the loss of a limb by amputation. A painful disease, which for a time had seemed likely to yield to the remedies employed, suddenly became greatly aggravated, and I was informed by two surgeons of the highest skill, who were consulted on my case, that I must choose between death and the sacrifice of a limb, and that my choice must be promptly made, for my strength was fast sinking under pain, sleeplessness, and exhaustion.

"I at once agreed to submit to the operation, but asked a week to prepare for it, not with the slightest expectation that the disease would take a favourable turn in the interval, or that the anticipated horrors of the operation would become less appalling by reflection upon them, but simply because it was so probable that the operation would be followed by a fatal issue, that I wished to prepare for death and what lies beyond it, whilst my faculties were clear and my emotions were comparatively undisturbed, for I knew well that if the operation were speedily followed by death, I should be in a condition, during the interval, in the last degree unfavourable to making preparation for the great change.

"The week, so slow, and yet so swift in its passage, at length came to an end, and the morning of the operation arrived. There were no anæsthetics in those days, and I took no preparative stimulant or anodyne of any kind, unless two cups of tea, which with a fragment of toast formed my breakfast, be considered such.

"The operation was a more tedious one than some which involve much greater mutilation. It necessitated cruel cutting through inflamed and morbidly sensitive parts, and could not be despatched by a few swift strokes of the knife. I do not suppose that it was more painful than the majority of severe surgical operations are, but I am not, I believe, mistaken in thinking that it was not less painful, and this is all that I wish to contend for.

"Of the agony it occasioned, I will say nothing. Suffering

so great as I underwent cannot be expressed in words, and thus fortunately cannot be recalled. The particular pangs are now forgotten; but the black whirlwind of emotion, the horror of great darkness, and the sense of desertion by God and man, bordering close upon despair, which swept through my mind and overwhelmed my heart, I can never forget, however gladly I would do so. Only the wish to save others some of my sufferings, makes me deliberately recall and confess the anguish and humiliation of such a personal experience; nor can I find language more sober or familiar than that I have used to express feelings which, happily for us all, are too rare as matters of general experience to have been shaped into household words.

"From all this anguish I should of course have been saved had I been rendered insensible by ether or chloroform, or otherwise, before submitting to the operation. On that point, however, I do not dwell, because it needs no proof, and the testimony of the thousands who have been spared such experiences by the employment of chloroform, is at hand to satisfy all who are *not* determined not to be satisfied.

"But there are other modes in which anæsthetics may serve a patient than by rendering him insensible at the period of his undergoing a surgical operation, and it is to these modes of service, which may not strike even the most humane and thoughtful surgeon, and cannot be matters of experience except to patients who have not taken anæsthetics, that I seek mainly to refer in this letter.

"I am not gifted with physical courage. Physical courage I understand to signify that consciousness of a power to endure bodily agony, which accompanies a certain temperament. Its possessors know from the first instinctively, and by and bye learn from experience, that a blow, a cut, a burn, an attack of toothache, or the like infliction of injury, or onset of pain, can be endured by them, though unwelcome, up to an extent of considerable severity, without excessively incommoding them

or exhausting their patience. From severe injuries and dangerous diseases such persons recover, fortified by the assurance that they can bear without flinching what would make others complain loudly; and they are not afraid to anticipate suffering, believing that they will be able to bear it. This estimable virtue is possessed more largely by men than by women, and by savage than by civilized men, and may or may not be accompanied by moral courage.

"I belong, on the other hand, to that large class, including most women, to whom cutting, bruising, burning, or any similar physical injury, even to a small extent, is a source of suffering never willingly endured, and always anticipated with more or less of apprehension. Pain in itself has nothing tonic or bracing in its effects upon such. In its relation to the body, it is a sheer and unmitigated evil, and every fresh attack of suffering only furnishes a fresh proof of the sensitiveness possessed to pain, and increases the apprehension with which its attacks are awaited.

"When I, accordingly, made up my mind to submit to the operation proposed to me, it was with the fullest conviction that the pain it would occasion would far exceed my power of patient tolerance, and I prepared for it, simply as for a dreadful necessity from which there was no escape. I awoke each morning from troubled sleep to reconsider the whole reasons for and against submitting to the surgeons, and by a painful effort reached again the determination not to draw back from my first resolution. From all this distracting mental struggle, which reacted very injuriously on my bodily constitution, I should have been exempted, had I been able to look forward to the administration of chloroform. A far greater amount of internal composure and serenity would then have been mine, and this mental peacefulness would have been a powerful aid towards sustaining my strength, and fitting me to bear the shock of the operation.

"Again, I concealed from the relatives who were about my

sickbed what awaited me, knowing that an announcement of the impending operation would occasion them the greatest grief, and fearing that the expression of that grief would utterly shake my resolution. On the very morning of the operation, I performed my toilet with peculiar pains and care, with a view to disarm their apprehensions on hearing that the surgeons were to pay me a visit that day; and I had at least the satisfaction of afterwards learning that the *ruse* was successful. But I need scarcely say that the mental tension occasioned by this reserve, and the continued effort to play a part, was a prejudicial exertion, and kept my faculties injuriously on the strain. Could I have told my friends that the operation would be painless, we should have conferred about it, and they and I would have been saved much distress.

"Further; during the operation, in spite of the pain it occasioned, my senses were preternaturally acute, as I have been told they generally are in patients in such circumstances. I watched all that the surgeons did with a fascinated intensity. I still recall with unwelcome vividness the spreading out of the instruments; the twisting of the tourniquet; the first incision; the fingering of the sawed bone; the sponge pressed on the flap; the tying of the blood-vessels; the stitching of the skin; and the bloody dismembered limb lying on the floor.

"Those are not pleasant remembrances. For a long time they haunted me, and even now they are easily resuscitated; and though they cannot bring back the suffering attending the events which gave them a place in my memory, they can occasion a suffering of their own, and be the cause of a disquiet which favours neither mental nor bodily health. From memories of this kind, those subjects of operations who receive chloroform are of course free; and could I, even now, by some Lethean draught erase the remembrances I speak of, I would drink it, for they are easily brought back, and they are never welcome.

"How far my experiences agree with those of others who have

undergone similar operations I do not know, but except that I may have a more active and roving fancy or imagination than some of my fellow-sufferers, I cannot doubt that my experiences are not singular.

"That the dread of pain keeps many a patient from submitting to operations, which would save life, is notorious; but the dread of a particular mode of inflicting pain is a more dissuasive motive with many than the dread of the pain so inflicted. Hundreds every day endure the great torture of toothache, rather than the small torture of the extraction of the tooth. Women, in particular, suffer prolonged agonies for months, rather than submit to a fraction of the same amount of pain at a surgeon's hand, because, as produced by him, it takes the form of an incision with a sharp knife; and a red-hot iron is held in such horror by most persons, that rather than be touched by it, though the pain it occasions is but momentary, they will endure the application of chemical caustics which occasion torture for hours.

"Anæsthetics render all such persons as great a service by rendering them insensible to the accompaniments of an operation, as by rendering them insensible to its pain. It is true that if they felt no pain, they might be as calm and even curious spectators of the dismembering of themselves as in dreams all men are, of what in waking life would be the most agonizing realities. But it is not less true, that sufferings equal to those of the severest operations are experienced by patients, in the course of acute or aggravated maladies, without being followed by the crushing effect of the operations which they rival in power to occasion agony; and surely this is not to be wondered at. Before the days of anæsthetics, a patient preparing for an operation, was like a condemned criminal preparing for execution. He counted the days till the appointed day came. He counted the hours of that day till the appointed hour came. He listened for the echo on the street of the surgeon's carriage. He watched for his pull at the door-bell; for his foot on the stair;

for his step in the room; for the production of his dreaded instruments; for his few grave words, and his last preparations before beginning. And then he surrendered his liberty, and revolting at the necessity, submitted to be held or bound, and helplessly gave himself up to the cruel knife." The excitement, disquiet, and exhaustion thus occasioned, could not but greatly aggravate the evil effects of the operation, which fell upon a physical frame predisposed to magnify, not to repel, its severity. To make a patient incognizant of the surgeon's proceedings, and unable to recall the details of an operation, is assuredly to save him from much present and much future self-torture, and to give to him thereby a much greater likelihood of recovery.

"Further; the horror with which attached relatives regard the prospect of operations on those very dear to them; a horror far surpassing that with which they would, in many cases, hear of such operations awaiting themselves, leads them often to dissuade their friends from submitting to surgical interference. The issue in too many cases is, that the poor patient listens, though but half convinced, to their arguments; tries doctor after doctor, and remedy after remedy, only to be compelled in the end, after weeks or months of prolonged suffering, to submit to the operation. The prospects of recovery, however, in such cases, are too often immensely lessened by the physical exhaustion and enfeebled general health which have resulted from the delay. The knowledge on the other hand that a mother, a sister, a wife, or a child, will be carried unconsciously through a severe operation, cannot but rob it of half its horrors in the eyes of friends, and will make them often the allies rather than the opponents of the surgeon, and keep them from showing the false kindness to their relatives, of dissuading them from submitting to the only treatment which promises a cure.

"The sum you will perceive of what I have been urging, is, that the *unconsciousness* of the patient secured by anæsthetics

is scarcely less important than the *painlessness* with which they permit injuries to be inflicted on him. To steep his senses in forgetfulness, and throw the whole intellectual machine out of action, when if allowed to work, it only moves with a rapidity and irregularity which threaten its integrity, and permanently injure it, is to do him a service, second only to that of saving him from suffering. And to make it impossible for him to recall a scene of horror, and torture himself by going over and over all its incidents again and again, is also to do him a signal service. Nor need more be said concerning the service done to his friends.

"I plead therefore for the administration of anæsthetics on the grounds enumerated. I fear you may think my confessions exaggerated, but I can most honestly declare that they are not. When I first heard that anæsthetics had been discovered, I could not and would not believe it. I have since thanked God many a time, that He has put it into your heart, and into that of other wise and humane men, to devise so simple and so safe a way of lessening pain.

"As for the fear entertained by some, that the moral good which accrues from suffering, and is intended by the Ruler of all to be secured by it, will be lost if agony is evaded by sufferers having recourse to anæsthetics, we may surely leave that to the disposal of Him who does all things well. The best answer to such complaints I have heard, was that given by an excellent old lady to another, who was doubting whether any of the daughters of Eve were at liberty to lessen by anæsthetics the pangs of child-bearing: 'You need not be afraid,' said the wiser lady, 'that there will not be enough of suffering in the world.'

"I think not; but may you be honoured still further to reduce its sum.—Yours most truly, AN OLD PATIENT."

In this letter Dr. Wilson wished to conceal the sex of the writer. When Dr. Simpson used it in support of his views, he

referred to it as from an esteemed professional colleague. "But, uncle," said his nephew, Dr. Alexander Simpson, "Dr. Wilson wrote it with the view of hiding even the sex of the author." "Nonsense!" was the reply; "how can that be, when he speaks of shaving?" This was the construction he had put on the expression, "On the very morning of the operation, I performed my toilet with peculiar pains and care." He could keenly sympathize with his colleague when he said, "I am not gifted with physical courage!" His own sensibility to pain was most acute. If even a very slight wound on a finger came to require dressing, he shrank from the operation with nervous dread. No wonder he set so much value on everything that tended to alleviate physical pain, and that he rejoiced with great joy over his discovery.[1]

[1] Not a few of the letters that reached him were amusing. Here is one :—

"East Hermitage, Leith, *9th Feby.* 1848.

"My dear Sir,—In return for your two excellent pamphlets, I beg your acceptance of my latest edition of poems and songs. On the other side I copy an extemporary I wrote the other day on hearing a noisy preacher.

"I must thank you for the unexpected notice of me in your second pamphlet.—Believe me very truly yours, Rob. Gilfillan.

"Impromptu.

"Cauld, cauld the kirk, and naething warm,
Except the preacher's roaring;
His voice—like taking chloroform—
Set a' the folk a-snoring.
But when they woke, they a' declared,
That neist time he was ranting,
He 'd find, *in token of regard*,
A congregation wanting!"

Even hints to butchers found their way to the public :—

"Painless Extinction.—Mr. S. St. had a ten-score pig to kill, and in order to render its death easy he caused a piece of sponge to be soaked in chloroform, placed in a cone of the form of an extinguisher, and the snout of the animal placed in this. After inhaling the spirit for some time the pig became perfectly unconscious, when the operation of killing was performed. Not a struggle nor a squall resulted, and the blood flowed just as freely as under ordinary circumstances. To borrow an Irish witticism, 'the pig would only awake to find itself dead.' This example might be copied with general advantage."

But epistles of commendation were not the only communications with which he was favoured. Timid practitioners still held back. "I dare not try it upon the rich," wrote a leading professional man from Dublin, "for *my own* sake, nor upon the poor, for *their* sake, until I see something more definite about its dangers and safeguards." Doubters were still in force, alarmists were coming to the front, routine was "dying hard," and showing its spite in anonymous contributions to public journals. Even hesitating friends felt called to point out dangers.

FROM DR. G., FEBRUARY 15, 1848.

"I wish you would persuade our Legislators of the necessity of taking more pains than they do for the protection of human life. I think such things as chloroform and arsenic are so liable to be employed as the instruments of crime, that the selling of them to unknown parties, and without a minute of the facts, ought to subject the vendor to penal consequences. It is of a piece with the neglect of regulations for preventing loss of life by shipwreck. It would be easy to secure passengers on board of vessels against the avarice of shipmasters, by wise regulations as to the number of passengers and the number of boats, waterproof jackets, etc., which they should carry. But our collective wisdom prefers fighting party battles to enacting useful laws.

"I think the chloroform is almost sure to be used as the means of debauching innocent women, which goes greatly to strengthen the argument for Legislative interference. A scoundrel would quail at the mere process of minuting his name, address, and the quantity of the drug, with the date, in the apothecary's book, and at the necessity of asking some one to certify to the vendor his identity as the person he pretends to be.

"I think you will not be long ere you have instances in abundance of this species of crime.

"For the Burkes and the Hares chloroform is the readiest implement they could desire, if it can be got without restriction."

FROM DR. P., JULY 24.

"What does Dr. Simpson say to the deaths from chloroform? I suspect *pure* chloroform undergoes change by keeping; but that the hydrate keeps better. In this respect it is something like hydrocyanic acid. We had a narrow escape from killing a patient at the London Hospital, by employing *pure chloroform which had been kept.* The same liquid a week or two previously was good. By keeping it had acquired fuming properties, from hydrochloric acid."

FROM MR. D., SEPTEMBER 15.

"At this moment, however, I shall not trouble you with any more lengthened detail of particulars merely affecting myself; I am more anxious to occupy my space at present in some allusion to what appears to me to be a point of great importance in the science of chloroform. In one of the extracts I sent you, I hinted my belief that chloroform is capable of evolving the state of trance, and hence of simulating all the phenomena of death. Now *a case has since occurred,* in which a young woman was actually not only entranced by the use of chloroform, but buried in that condition. The particulars you will find among the new batch of extracts now enclosed. It must also be recollected that the lower animals do revive from its influence after exhibiting appearances very like those of death. But instances of full entrancement are probably only possible in the human race—hybernation notwithstanding. And I think it will generally be found that instances of the deepest entrancement will be those most suddenly, or even unexpectedly excited—that is, that the more sudden or rapid the transition to insensibility, the deeper will the degree of entrancement be."

Alarming reports of death from the inhalation of chloroform

were almost weekly getting into circulation. These disturbed Dr. Simpson the more when he found that their authors could not be clearly identified, and summarily dealt with. He had, however, the painful impression that they emanated from practitioners. At length a case of death occurred at Newcastle, which the Coroner of the district attributed to the use of chloroform. This afforded him an opportunity to bring the matter under the notice of his class.

This he did in February 1848, and showed from the medical evidence at the inquest, that death could not have resulted from the inhalation of chloroform. His lecture on the occasion was published in the *Scotsman*. The report of the case had excited a good deal of public interest, and the explanation, which was eagerly looked for, was held to be conclusive that the girl had died from asphyxia, or artificial choking. The energetic and decided way in which he brought the Coroner and others to book, did much to put an end to alarming reports.

The results of the use of chloroform in Surgery and Midwifery was the last branch of Dr. Simpson's great argument in its favour. Within a few months after its discovery, he was able to point to these with feelings of joy and thankfulness. Since then the blessings have been increased a thousandfold. And the statistics of practice in private life and in public hospitals all over the world, bear testimony increasingly not only to the inexpressibly vast amount of pain saved, but also to the number of lives preserved, and especially to the great reduction of the death-rate, in the worst cases of surgical and obstetrical practice. Some of the special cases reported to him at a comparatively early date gave him the highest satisfaction. His friend Dr. Magnus Retzius wrote from Stockholm, December 21, 1847 :—

"Your application of the chloroform, or what we call formyl-superchloride, to bring on the anæsthetic state, is a very great improvement. I have already tried it three times in

obstetrical cases, and one time on our celebrated chemist Baron Berzelius, who, since a fortnight, unhappily is felled from a paralysis of the lower parts of the body, in consequence of a spinal disease. I was obliged to apply on his back four large maxas at the side of the spine, and nevertheless he has complete feeling in the back and the paraplegical limbs. He was quite unconscious of pain during and after the operation, asking, as he awoke, if the firing should not soon begin. Alas! I am afraid nothing will help."

Later, he received from Sir James Clark, Her Majesty's physician, the following note :—

"London, *April 19th*, 1853.

"Dear Dr. Simpson,—I beg you to accept my thanks for your book. You certainly are the most industrious man in the profession. It is really surprising that with your extensive and harassing practice you can find time to *bring forth* a volume every year. I have not yet had time to look into it, but Sharpey, who has read a good part of it, tells me it is very pleasant reading on a rather dry subject. . . . But I am almost forgetting to notice the chief object of my writing you, which was to tell you that the Queen had chloroform exhibited to her during her late confinement. . . . It acted admirably. It was not at any time given so strongly as to render the Queen insensible, and an ounce of chloroform was scarcely consumed during the whole time. Her Majesty was greatly pleased with the effect, and she certainly never has had a better recovery. . . . I know this information will please you, and I have little doubt it will lead to a more general use of chloroform in Midwifery practice in this quarter than has hitherto prevailed.

"Pray, when you next come to town let me see you, and consider yourself engaged to dine with me, if you do dine in your flights.

"Have the goodness to remember me to Scott when you see him.—Yours truly, Ja. Clark."

The gradual and steady increase in the production of chloroform is the best proof of its ever extending use. In little more than twenty years after its discovery Dr. Simpson proudly pointed to this, as we have seen, in his letter to Dr. Bigelow.

While then all, yea, more than all, the blessings he had ever anticipated from its use have been realized, it has kept free from most of the evils prophesied by timid men. In view of the facts stated in this chapter, the reader cannot but feel that the words engraved on the monument at Boston, U.S., to commemorate anæsthesia by etherization, are highly appropriate :— "THIS ALSO COMETH FORTH FROM THE LORD OF HOSTS, WHICH IS WONDERFUL IN COUNSEL AND EXCELLENT IN WORKING."

CHAPTER IX.

New Year's Greeting—Psychology—De Quincey—Sir William Hamilton—Children—Question as to Removal to London—John Reid's Fatal Illness—Religious Impressions—Opinions of Strangers—Letter to Dr. Collins—The Air-Tractor—Natural Analogies—Letter from Dr. Paterson, Leith, Dr. Johnston, Berwick, and Dr. Sharpey—Professor Naegelé—Collisions with Practitioners—Change of Physician by Lord Jeffrey—False Impressions—Note from Principal Lee—Letter to Mrs. Simpson.

"In 1848, 'seek ye FIRST the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness,' for 'What shall it *profit* a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'"—Such were the words with which an anonymous friend greeted Dr. Simpson in the beginning of 1848. The communication was one of many of a like kind that reached him, when friend offers to friend "all the compliments of the season." Though at this period many thanked him for "his kind and Christian views" of their case, or for "his warm Christian sympathy" with their sorrow, yet the motive under which he worked was not love to God, it was devotion to his profession, in order to the good of his fellow-men; and even this motive and work brought a high reward. They were means of blessing to many who loved Christ, and who had a warm place in their affection for the kind and skilful physician. Without inquiring into the grounds of that belief by which this class had come to differ from others, he was quick to notice the difference, and to honour it. "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say

unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." That the interest of some of his patients in his spiritual good took a censorious tone and turn, and found expression in anonymous communications, casts no shadow on those who approached him personally, speaking to him of Christ, and longing to bring the highest influences to bear on him. All this was to bear fruit, but not yet.

At the time when Dr. Simpson gave a good deal of attention to Mesmerism, his mind had been turned to phenomena touching the relations between spirit and matter, which led him to the study of Psychology. With his usual directness of purpose he went at once to those best fitted to direct him to sources of information, as Sir William Hamilton, Professor Macdougall, and others. Dr. Samuel Brown had before directed him to the writings of De Quincey, and he now asked his attention to the circumstances in which that gifted man then was :—

"St. Cuthbert's G., *Jan.* 9, '48.

"Dear Dr. Simpson,—I enclose you Archdeacon Hare's tribute to the claims of Thomas de Quincey. Apart from the literary and philosophical eminence of the venerable Archdeacon, there are two circumstances which enhance the value of this commendation—

"1st. It is spontaneous and incidental.

"2d. Hare appeared some years ago in the arena of literary contest against De Quincey; it was in the controversy concerning the accusation of the crime of *plagia* brought against Coleridge.

"Savage Landor lately said, to one very capable of reporting it, that he also takes in *Tait's Magazine* solely for the sake of De Quincey's articles. I have observed during the last ten years that I seem never to have met any one prone to literary enjoyments who has not read the *Confessions of an English Opium-eater*. Dr. Chalmers indeed had never perused them till the last year of his busy life; but he was astonished at

their eloquence and power, and eagerly sought the acquaintance of their gifted penman.

"De Quincey was born to the possession of moderate fortune, but he did not inherit the art of retaining it. Money slipped through his impotent fingers like water. On one occasion he heard that poor Coleridge was in straits, and sent him £500. Then he was long steeped in the vice of opium-eating, and soon came to poverty. Yet he has been industrious in an astonishing degree; writing for ever, but not knowing the way to write to the best advantage for himself. His work on Political Economy, his essays on the same subject in *Blackwood* and *Tait*, his series of dissertations on the Essenes, his numerous pieces of æsthetical and psychological criticism, his *Suspiria de Profundis*, and his innumerable literary *jeux d'esprits*, certainly constitute a most wonderful and enormously read contribution to the body of British literature. It is at least a grand, if a pitiful consideration, that this singular but abnormal spirit should have done so little for himself, while he has done so much for us! He is now upwards of seventy, and '*exceeding poor*.' Wordsworth characterizes him as the most wonderful master of elegant and far-reaching conversation he has ever known, yet he is condemned in his old age to mumble alone in a garret. The friend, and the equal friend, of Coleridge, Southey, Wordsworth, Lamb, and Wilson, is now almost friendless. Everlasting want, and everlasting writing for *Blackwood*, *Tait*, the *North British Review*, are his ever-recurring lot. Many people will doubtless trace this miserable contrast of the man and his circumstances to his opium-eating; but I assure you he has for some years abandoned it entirely, and he is now in the opposite extreme of water-drinking. Is this not an indication of heroic courage and perseverance?

"This note has become longer than I intended, but I love and honour De Quincey in particular, and I dearly honour and love the cause of the '*poor wise man in a little city*' in

general; and these things shall be my best apology.—I am affectionately yours, SAMUEL BROWN."

A talk with Sir William Hamilton on an old theory, "The Divisibility of the Sensible Soul," led to the following note:—

FROM SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am disappointed in being able to find the passage in St. Augustine, of which I have a distinct recollection, but fourteen volumes in folio may easily baffle a hasty research. I remember that he mentions, while walking out with a friend, he met with a small animal of many feet (a scolopendra or millepede it must have been); this, on being cut into several pieces, each made off by itself. It struck the Bishop—How, if the sensible soul be one and indivisible, the several parts could be thus animated, etc. The same difficulty I have seen noticed by sundry of the schoolmen. If I meet with the passage I will send you a note of it.

"I am glad to hear that you are now so nearly well. By the bye, Dr. Allen Thomson carried off your *Unzer*, which I had read in great part with much interest. I thought he said he was going to see you after he left this; but Lady Hamilton says that I must have mistaken him, and that he had come from you. I mention this that in case you may have occasion for the book you may know where it is to be found.—Believe me, ever truly yours, W. HAMILTON.

"16 GT. KING STREET, *Wednesday*, 16*th Jany*."

Both the saint and the psychologist were in error, in believing that any small terrestrial animal with many feet has the power of multiplying by subdivision, either forced or natural. Certainly none of the *myriapods* have. The many-footed forms likely to come under the eye of Augustine—as *scolopendra, julus, spirotreptus, lithobius*, etc.—rapidly die when cut

through. Indeed, any injury to the vessels, which in them serve the purpose of a heart, is quickly fatal.

Since the birth of Walter, their second son and third child, other three children had been born—Mary, who died in infancy, James, and Jessie. In the following notes to a patient, Mrs. Tootal, Jessie is "Sunbeam,"—the child referred to as "talking with angel sisters."

"Still headaches; weary, weary, heartless headaches.

"The back of *her* head is bare, quite bare, as if shaved: smooth as one's palm. And it is all the result of rub, rubbing her little head on the sofa, pillow, or whatever she lies upon, as she talks to her angel sisters and brothers in the roof of the room or bed, and rollicks her head about; as she gibbers (*not* in English), and laughs, and smiles, and jokes with them. And many a conversation of the kind she has. I wonder sometimes what *all* the talk and jokes *can* be about; it must be something very very pleasant and delightful—if we may judge at least from her earnestness and merry smiles. And she grows apace, and makes us all happy; your cowpock-sister, my wee Jessie, my wee-*est* Jessie. Oh may God bless her!

"Dr. Collins—I saw his letter; he should have sent it to me, and not to the Journal, and I would have put him right privately, for he is grievously wrong. It is an old 'dispute' between him and my predecessor, Dr. Hamilton, and he wishes to saddle it upon me. So be it. I had no time in the beginning of the week to write, but last Thursday I rose at 2 A.M. and wrote him a letter of thirty pages in six hours (which I considered a good feat)."

Again:—

"Well! how are you?—healthy, happy, and merry, I hope.

"I got home nicely. Mina and Sunbeam opened the door. Sunbeam's little mouth quite opened when she returned into the dining-room; and she took a long pretty laugh to welcome me. She has become very cunning, and won't lie in her own

bed during these cold nights, but ever creeps back beside her mother. She allows herself to be laid down (AS IF she were asleep), but then she opens quietly her imploring eyes, after it is done; and, and *must* come back.

"Was out most of the night I returned, and had a very terrible headache two days afterwards. I could not raise my head. Jessie and all the children well and merry. Jeany much better.

"How am I to thank Mr. Tootal and you for all your great, great kindness? It is impossible, and I won't try it.

"Pray give my kindest regards to Miss Tootal, and believe me, yours very truly, J. Y. SIMPSON."

In the spring of 1848 circumstances occurred that seemed to hold out a hope to several of the most eminent men connected with St. Bartholomew's Hospital, that Dr. Simpson might be persuaded to take up his abode in London.

"*March* 9, 1848.

"MY DEAR DOCTOR,—I presume you are aware that Rigby has resigned the office of Lecturer on Midwifery at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Thinking it not impossible you may entertain some idea of removing to London, I have determined to ascertain your wishes as to the acceptance of the Obstetric Chair, before I decided on becoming a candidate for the appointment. Should you entertain any such desire, I think I may venture to say there will be no difficulty in its accomplishment in a manner agreeable to your feelings, and most readily shall I relinquish my claims. . . . I shall be obliged by your giving me your decision as soon as possible, as, until I receive your reply, I shall be perfectly passive in the matter. P. S."

In a few days he received a much more important communication:—

"*March* 18, 1848.

"MY DEAR SIR,—A vacancy is about to take place in the Obstetric department of our school at St. Bartholomew's, and

you will readily believe that my colleagues and myself, the medical officers and teachers of the Hospital and School, are anxious that the Chair should be filled by one whose abilities and skill have gained for him the highest professional character. With these views, our thoughts were immediately turned towards yourself, especially as it had been whispered that you may intend to leave Edinburgh for London. Messrs. S., P., and myself have had a strictly confidential conference on the subject, the result of which is that I write, in their names as well as my own, to open the matter to you, and to inquire whether, as we strongly hope, you might be disposed to join our School. We are aware that, in addition to the immediate duties of the Chair, the efficient teaching of Midwifery requires much time and labour in other ways, more perhaps than you would be willing or able to devote. Should you be inclined to accede to our proposal, we shall be able, if you wish it, to procure any assistance you may require, either in the professional or other departments, from a gentleman whose talents and acquirements render him not unworthy to be associated with yourself.

"I can only add, that to be instrumental in procuring your powerful aid for our establishment at St. Bartholomew's would be very gratifying to yours, my dear Sir, with much esteem and respect, WM. L."

A sad calamity had fallen on his old and most beloved friend Dr. John Reid. "In the month of November 1847 a small blister appeared on his tongue, which before long opened into an ulcer, betraying the symptoms of cancer—a disease which, in spite of the advancement of medicine, is almost synonymous with protracted unappeasable torture, and painful lingering death." In May 1848 he consulted Drs. Simpson and Duncan, who advised him to try rest and change of scene, "and if these failed to be of service, to proceed to London, and consult the surgeons there."

On the 31st August advantage was taken of Mr. Fergusson's

visit to Edinburgh, and an operation was performed by him on the tongue, in Dr. Simpson's house. Dr. Simpson, Dr. James Duncan, Professor Goodsir, and Professor J. H. Bennet were present. Dr. Reid afterwards went to London and consulted Professor Syme, Sir B. Brodie, and Mr. Fergusson :—

"London, 7 Panton Sq., Coventry St., Piccadilly.

"My dear Simpson,—I arrived here on Tuesday, and waited upon Fergusson that evening. He is unwilling to believe that *so great* an increase in the size of the glands in the neck can arise *entirely* from the same disease as that of the tongue, and that part of it may be due to irritation. As the extirpation of the enlarged glands, from their proximity to the large blood-vessels and nerves, would be difficult, he wishes to watch the affected parts for a few days, before he makes up his mind what to do. In the meantime, with most grateful thanks for all your many kindnesses, believe me, your very sincere friend,

"John Reid."

"16 George St., Hanover Square, 21*st Oct.* 1848.

"My dear Simpson,—Our friend Reid went north on Wednesday last, with my consent. He now declares himself to be in as good health as he ever was all his life, and in most respects he looks so. He has improved in condition amazingly since he came here, and declares himself fit for almost any exertion.

"I grieve, however, to think that there is still that about him to cause the utmost anxiety with us all. The swelling in the neck is still present, and one cannot but fear that it is malignant. When he came here I fancied that in all probability it owed its sudden increase to the irritation of the neighbouring wound, and that part of it at all events was from inflammatory tumefaction. . . .

"Whatever may be the final result, I shall for my own part feel gratified that our friendly attempt has been made to save him. If the swelling causes further anxiety he will come up to me again.

"I have heard with regret that you have been ill—too much work no doubt. You must adopt the plan of getting away from business altogether for a month or so each year; few men better deserve such relaxations. . . .

"When you can spare a few minutes to write me a note I shall be happy to hear from you; meantime I remain, yours very faithfully, WM. FERGUSSON."

The last note received by Dr. Simpson from his friend is dated St. Andrews, 22d November 1848:—

"MY DEAR SIMPSON,—I have had a very severe affliction since I saw you last in the death of my little boy. My own late trials seemed light in comparison with this.

"I have cancelled the last page in the volume I lately published, for the purpose of introducing a list of *errata*, including the stupid one I permitted to remain in the short communication you had the goodness to give me.

"My kindest regards to Mrs. Simpson and Miss Grindlay, in which Mrs. Reid cordially joins me.—Believe me, my dear Simpson, very sincerely yours, JOHN REID.

"I send you a copy of the *new page*, that you may substitute it in the place of the one to be cancelled."

Wave after wave had broken over John Reid. But he had learned that the Lord sits on the floods. He had come to say, "My only hopes of obtaining mercy rest on the atoning sacrifice of my Saviour." His last words, "The world is behind," told how complete his triumph was. Dr. Simpson was greatly affected as time after time he heard of his friend's sufferings. Yet it could not fail to be to him a source of sad satisfaction, that his playfellow in boyhood, his fellow-student and ever dear friend, had the agony of his last moments alleviated by means of his great discovery. "Every function but breathing seemed suspended," says Dr. George Wilson. "Yet, when sensitiveness to all else appeared extinct, the consciousness of agony returned,

and before the final close, the suffering, but for chloroform, would have been extreme."

Not long after the death of Dr. Reid I had frequent conversations with Dr. Simpson. Without venturing to trace the source of the influence, one could not help noticing that his interest in religion was becoming more marked than before. I seldom saw him without being asked the meaning of some passage of Scripture on which he had been thinking. Occasionally, too, a severe expression escaped from him regarding what he called "the extravagant views" of devoted ministers. "Why do they not preach the gospel," he once said, "and not give out views that spring from the influence of a diseased body on the mind? There is ——! I heard him the other day, but only a man gone in *dyspepsia* would have said what he said." Some of the difficulties relating to the questions raised by the author of *The Vestiges*, began to get his attention, and to form topics of conversation. It was clear that household trial, the death of friends, the sight of suffering, and the reflex influence of the sermons heard on Sabbath, were stirring the surface at least of his deep spiritual nature. And this continued till the soil was fitted to receive that good seed of the Word, which was to work a complete change in his heart and life. He had little time for reflection. The great change had come to his friend Reid when "an exile among the lonely hills and still lakes" of Cumberland. It was to come to Simpson also, but not thus.

Since the introduction of chloroform, his name and fame had attracted to Queen Street men of influence from all lands, and they returned home to spread reports of his ways and his work, in terms whose very exaggeration bore witness to the deep impressions made on them by what they had seen and heard. A medical officer of the Indian army wrote to the *Bombay Telegraph and Courier*:—"Decidedly the most wonderful man of his age—I mean of the age in which he lives—is Simpson of Edinburgh. In him are realized John Bell's

four ideals of the perfect Esculapius—the brain of an *Apollo*, the eye of an *Eagle*, the heart of a *Lion*, and the hand of a *Lady*. Nothing baffles his intellect; nothing escapes his penetrating glance; he sticks at nothing, and—*he bungles nothing*. If his practice be worth a rupee per annum, it is worth £10,000!—twice as much as Dr. Hamilton ever realized, and nearly twice the amount of the late Abercrombie's practice. From all parts, not of Britain only, but of Europe, do ladies rush to see, consult, and fee the man. He has spread joy through many a rich man's house by enabling his wife to present him with a living child, a feat which none but Simpson ever dared to enable her to do. To watch him of a morning with his poor patients (them only of course was I permitted to see) is a treat. In comes a woman with a fibrous tumour, which fifty other practitioners have called by fifty other names. One minute suffices for his diagnosis; another sees her in a state of insensibility, and in less than a third, two long needles are thrust inches deep into the tumour, and a galvanic battery is at work *discussing* it. 'Leave her alone quietly,' says Simpson, 'she 'll take care of herself—no fear.' One up, another down, is the order of the day. What other men would speculate as to the propriety of for hours, Simpson *does* in a minute or two. He is bold, but not reckless; ever ready, but never rash. He is prepared for every contingency, and meets it on the instant. Everything seems to prosper in his hands. As to ether and chloroform, they seem like invisible intelligences, doomed to obey his bidding—familiars who do his work because they must, never venturing to produce effects one iota greater or less than he desires. While other men measure out the liquids, fumble about, and make a fuss, Simpson, in what an Irishman would call *the most promiscuous manner possible*, does the job in a minute or two. He is indeed a wonderful man."

In one of the notes quoted above, reference is made to Dr. Simpson's letter to Dr. Collins of Dublin. The letter was written in answer to one addressed to himself, relative to professional

papers then appearing in the *Provincial Medical Journal.* Dr. Collins questioned the use he was making of facts and statistics contained in a work of which he was the author. His letter seemed to Dr. Simpson to be couched in terms, and to manifest a spirit little in harmony with the friendliness that had existed between them, or with the discussion of a scientific question :—

"In the last No. of that Journal you have, on this subject, published a letter, addressed to me. For your own sake, I do sincerely regret that you had not first sent this communication to myself instead of to the Editor of the Journal, because I should have had pleasure in showing you privately the serious errors of calculation and reasoning which you have committed in it, instead of being compelled, as now, and in self-defence, to speak of them openly and publicly.

"Let me premise, however, first and once for all, that in writing the fourth section of the memoir (the one on which you principally comment), as in writing all the other sections of it, I have, as far as I am aware, made no remark upon you or upon your work, calculated, in any degree, to call forth a communication from you conceived and written in such a tone and spirit as your letter betrays. Under various chapters in your treatise, you invite your readers to use your data for further calculations. I have done so, but I have done no more ; and I should have felt sorry indeed if I had allowed any word or expression of disrespect to escape from me of which you or any one could complain. I have quoted, to be sure, and in your own words, some of the interesting cases which you have published, as cases where, probably, the proposed operation would have been more successful in saving human life. But certainly, in doing this, I no more attached, or dreamt of attaching, any blame to you in these instances than I could mean to attach blame to you for not using anæsthesia in your practice twenty years ago, when the practice of anæsthesia in Midwifery was unknown.

"I have often already stated, and gladly and willingly repeat, that your work is a most admirable collection of obstetric cases and data, and that it would be difficult in this respect to overpraise its candour and worth; but I believe at the same time that the deductions which you yourself have drawn from your data are, in most cases, incorrect. Your data are, I believe, exceedingly accurate and valuable, but your own deductions from these extensive data, are, I believe, equally, in most cases, extremely inaccurate and valueless."

Dr. Simpson took a rough hold of his opponent, and wrote with an earnestness, if not severity, difficult, at first sight, to be understood. But the explanation becomes apparent when we remember the construction which he put upon Dr. Collins's letter. His mode of using statistics, on which he ever set much value, was held to be illegitimate. But chiefly, he believed an attempt was made to defend the theory of the therapeutic value of conscious pain, which he had been called to deal with in the chloroform controversy. Moreover, the question was again raised, which he had thought settled, namely, Is there anything in mere pain itself, when protracted, injurious to the body? It seemed to him he had established the affirmative. But allegations to the contrary again met him, and roused him to a protest more powerful than pleasant. Perhaps, however, the warmth of the reply was greater than the subject merited. The letters that reached him from practitioners in different parts of the country seem to indicate, that the profession very generally believed he had the best of the argument.

Toward the end of December 1848, he read a paper to the Edinburgh Obstetric Society on the use of a new instrument, the Air-Tractor, and in February 1849 another, on the same subject, to the Medico-Chirurgical Society. Dr. Neil Arnott of London had previously described an instrument of this sort in his work on Physics. But the idea had occurred to Dr. Simpson independently so early as 1836.

"My dear Sir,—It affords me much pleasure to state, in reply to your note of this morning, that I have a most clear and distinct recollection of the origin of your idea regarding the Air-Tractor.

"In passing along the street together one afternoon in the summer of 1836, we happened to come upon a group of boys busily occupied lifting large stones with round pieces of leather wetted, a cord being attached to the centre, and commonly called suckers in this place." (Reference is then made to the use Dr. Simpson thought might be made of a similar instrument in medical practice.)

"I have often thought of the idea since, as well as mentioned it to others, long before you published an account of your air-tractor, and I assure you I regretted much my inability to be present at the meeting of the Medico-Chirurgical Society when you read an account of it, otherwise I should then have publicly mentioned my early recollections of the origin, in a crude way, of your valuable instrument.—Yours ever sincerely,

"Robt. Paterson.

"Leith, 7*th April* 1849."

To a patient he wrote:—"I have been up for three nights working, as I am, here. When I get home I will enclose in this two Tractors. Send one to your father—will you? The instrument is now nearly perfect. I showed it last Wednesday to the Medico-Chirurgical Society. There was a great crowd of doctors, etc. The experiments went off beautifully. I fixed a small tractor in the palm of my right hand before them, and lifted up with it an iron weight of 28 lbs. It could lift double. One of the physicians to the St. Petersburg Court (Dr. Marginlies) is here. He admired the *idea*, but doubted if it would really answer in practice. Well, I took him and others down a few days ago to the Hospital to see a baddish case, and fixed the tractor on. The operation was most successful. The Russian danced with joy, crying, 'C'est superbe, superbe; c'est immortalité à vous,'" etc. etc.

Sir James Clark, Dr. Locock, and others, expressed their belief that the instrument would be useful, but pointed out difficulties, and reported conversations they had had with Dr. Arnott on the subject. But the chief interest in the matter to the general reader is the illustration of the use Dr. Simpson made of natural analogies. On these he communicated with Dr. Johnston and Dr. Sharpey. The reference in Dr. Johnston's note to "the Cuttle Fish," shows that his mind had been turned to such natural adaptations before he received any information from them.

"My dear Sir,—I was in the act of reading with great interest your paper on Suckers in the Journal when your letter was put into my hand. I cannot but admire your anxious ingenuity, and wonder at your energy and wide survey of matters, and am greatly pleased with the mode and manner in which you treat every subject that occupies your rich and fertile brain. It seems to me that you have hit upon the best type and model for your purpose in the cup of the Cuttles. In the different genera these cups present certain modifications, that might suggest useful hints. Goodsir perhaps could let you have specimens, for the genera are foreign, or you might look at Owen's paper in the Cyclopædia of Comparative Anatomy and Physiology. The cups armed with crooked spines would seem to give a firm hold, nor need they be made so long as to penetrate the skull. Sir Everard Home's observations must be looked upon with suspicion—nothing trustworthy ever came from him—and you will find a refutation of his observations in Blackwall's Zoological Researches. I do not remember that in this book there is anything to your purpose, but it had better be looked at—there may be. I do not remember any other book that would seem to give you information, nor can I just now remember any very suitable animals. The fore-legs of the Dytiscus marginalis, of which Dr. Greville can give you a specimen, is very curiously constructed for holding on firmly; and the sucker of the Cockpaidle and of the Lamprey eel

may be looked at. The latter seems to be the likeliest of the two.

"I shall look forward with great interest to the result of your most ingenious and useful inquiry, and do trust it may add another to the many claims you have already on the gratitude of humanity.

"What has become of your *letters* on chloroform?—I am, my dear Sir, yours very truly, GEORGE JOHNSTON.

"BERWICK-ON-TWEED, *February* 7, '49."

Dr. Sharpey entered more fully into the matter, and supplied him with many references to sources of information, British and Foreign. He adds—"What is to come of our redundant population! The sanitary people on the one hand keeping folks from dying, and you with your chloroform and your other 'cantrips' smoothing the road into the world: it will be like the threatened glut of gold, and reduce the value of honest people that have run their risk of ruder chances. Henceforth you must be told to take care of yourself, because good folk are scarce. The cry will be for more room!" A copy of the communication to the Obstetric Society was forwarded to Professor Naegelé of Heidelberg, who replied:—

"MON TRÈS HONORÉ ET TRÈS CHER COLLÈGUE,—Mon ami, Mr. le Professeur Arnold de Rugby, qui part pour l'Angleterre veut bien se charger de vous faire parvenir une lettre; je profite donc de cette occasion pour vous remercier de l'attention que vous avez la bonté de me témoigner par l'envoi réitéré de vos écrits. Je vous prie en même tems d'accepter comme un faible signe de mon estime et de ma reconnaissance le petit écrit ci-joint, dont l'impression a été retardée par un accident inattendu.

"Que le ciel comble de ses bénédictions tous vos travaux pour le bien de l'humanité et de la science!

"Agréez, Monsieur, l'assurance de la haute considération et estime avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être votre tout dèvoué,

"NAEGELÉ PÈRE.

"HEIDELBERG, *le* 3 *Février* 1849."

It would have been almost impossible for any man, even with far less practice than Dr. Simpson now had, to escape misconstruction of his acts, and charges of interference with the practice of other men. I have found the records of several cases of this kind among his papers—cases in which he was willing to bear the blame in silence, when by a few words he might have vindicated himself. But these he refused to speak rather than implicate others. I remember to have heard it stated, that his dislike to a practitioner with whom he had been called to consult, had led him to advise that another should be employed, when, indeed, the demand for a change had been made by the patient. The reader will perceive the delicacy and difficulty of illustrating these remarks by the statement of facts. In most of the cases that have come under my notice, both the physicians and patients are alive, and it would be little to profit to enter into explanations which Dr. Simpson himself refused to give. One example, however, may be given, without the risk of unpleasantness to any one. It was alleged that the practitioner who ordinarily attended the household of the late Lord Jeffrey, was superseded by advice of Dr. Simpson. But that there was not the shadow of truth in this the following notes show :—

"EDINBURGH, *Monday, 2d April.*

"MY DEAR DOCTOR,—Mrs. Jeffrey has so entirely lost confidence in ——, and feels so uncomfortable, when obliged to trust him, that I have found it necessary to come to the resolution of dispensing with his future attendance; and what I wish to consult you upon is as to *who* should be selected to succeed him? In entreating the favour of your advice upon this subject, I feel that I am using a liberty to which I am not perhaps entitled. But I trust you will make some allowance for the anxiety which dictates the application, and you may perfectly rely on my treating any suggestion with which you may favour me as *strictly confidential*, and never to be divulged

to any party whatever, but used *solely* for my own guidance and consideration.

"I expect to see you and —— at Craigcrook to-morrow; but you will, of course, give him no hint as to this communication, as I cannot make the painful intimation I contemplate till I have secured the services of some other.—With many apologies, ever very faithfully yours, F. JEFFREY.

"I think you will find us going on well to-morrow."

"CRAIGCROOK, *Tuesday*, 3 *o'clock*.

"MY DEAR DOCTOR,—I hope we shall see you to-morrow, and that you have forgiven me for my note of yesterday. I wish now only to add, that the persons we have thought of are principally Professor Miller, Dr. Robertson (formerly near Cramond), Dr. Duncan, and Dr. Scott. Except Robertson, of whom Mrs. J. has a high opinion, we know the others only by report. The main thing, next to general competency, must be the capacity of giving regular attendance. If the nature and urgency of *your* avocations did not unavoidably interfere with this, I should desire no other adviser. But I fear we must also have one in ordinary.—Ever yours, F. JEFFREY."

"CRAIGCROOK, *Thursday*.

"MY DEAR DR.,—I have made the painful communication I told you of, and written to beg Professor Miller to come with you on *Saturday* morning, for which I trust that you will make the necessary arrangements.

"The patient, I hope, is going on favourably. She sat up for some hours yesterday, with very little sense of fatigue, and slept well after.—Ever faithfully yours, F. JEFFREY."

That in these circumstances, when his advice was asked, he recommended Professor Miller, was in no way discourteous to the other gentlemen named. Moreover, the terms of Lord Jeffrey's notes prevented him from even indicating to the former medical adviser his part in the affair.

Communications reached him almost daily, in which patients, or their relatives, thanked him for his great kindness, attention, or liberality in refusing a fee:—

"Old Burlington Street, *May* 11.

"Dear Simpson," wrote Dr. Forbes, "when I sent off yesterday morning to your address, *via* Maclachlan, a copy of my unprofessional book, 'The Physician's Holiday,' I was not aware of what my niece Eppie Webster's letter informed me in the afternoon, how your *liberality* to her had equalled your kindness—it could not exceed it. In her name and my own I sincerely thank you, and you may rest assured that your attention to my good niece will never be forgotten by her or hers. In all her and her sister's letters she speaks of the great kindness shown to her by both you and Mrs. Simpson. Along with the 'Holiday' I have enclosed a little pamphlet on obstetrical instruments, just received from Stockholm. It seems a mere chronology. If it contains aught needing interpretation, Dr. Charlton of Newcastle will transcribe it for you.

"With the exception of the Introduction, my 'Holiday' is a mere *Tour*, hardly worthy the notice of great doctors like you, but possibly Mrs. Simpson may find a passage or two that may interest her. I wish, for your own health's sake, it had sufficient attractions to draw you to *do likewise*, as I cannot but fear lest your inconceivable activity may in the end work out the cerebral quarry before its time. But I fear that my professional friends may find its pages rather of the anæsthetic than the stimulant kind, and keep them *from* rather than draw them *to* my glorified land of the Switzers.—Believe me, dear Simpson, yours faithfully, John Forbes."

On another topic there is a characteristic note from the late Principal Lee. An Irishman had addressed him as "*Dear* Sir," asking, "What is it necessary for me to do that I may qualify myself for following the profession of accoucheur? I understand the Edinburgh University is the best place I could attend."—

"College, *July* 30, 1849.

"My dear Sir,—A *dear* friend, of whose existence I was not aware (if indeed he be a real entity), wishes me to tell him something which he might almost as well have asked from the child unborn; and as I do not dissent from the statement in his second paragraph, I think I cannot do better than transfer his letter to you.—In haste, believe me ever yours most faithfully, John Lee."

In the summer of 1849 Mrs. Simpson and the children went to the Isle of Man, on a visit to their relatives, Mr. and Mrs. Petrie. Dr. Simpson kept them informed of his "doings in bachelorship:"—

"My dearest Jessie,—Enclosed is the vaccine matter which you wished for Helen's child. My respects to George and her.

"Mrs. Black drove out with me to Lasswade yesterday; we then ran on to Musselburgh and Portobello. It was a beautiful day; and the country looked charming. Dined with Dr. Bennet in the evening. To-day I dine with Mr. Everard at Granton.

"David and I were at Bathgate on Thursday. Enjoyed it. All well. Janet is to be in this week.

"Quite rejoiced by your letter of yesterday saying you were all so well, and especially James so much better. The ointment was sent a few days ago. Apply it at night, rubbing a small portion over the eruption. The cream may be taken in any quantity.

"In your yesterday's letter you speak of coming across to Liverpool. Now we all get on here quite smoothly and easily, and I do think you ought to stop quietly at the Raggatt. In truth I don't think you would feel happy and easy-minded at such a distance from the children. And the journey back and back again is a long and tiresome one enough. Do just write what we should get done here—if anything is to be done,—and it will be easily managed.

"I hope baby behaves like herself under the weaning. A few days will readily teach her.

"On Saturday Miller and I were at Hamilton Palace and Glasgow. Miller stopped to go on for a week or two's fishing in Argyleshire, with his brothers. The Earl of Balcarras is about to become Duke of Crawford, a VERY old title. He will be Premier Peer of Scotland, which touches the Duke of H.

"I hope you and the children are all enjoying the country greatly, and benefiting by it. We get on all so easily here, that I do think you should remain at the Raggatt, instead of coming here at the end of this month. It is a long and tiresome journey; and you would be strengthened against the winter by remaining now with the children for two or three months, *provided* Eliza will keep you. If there is anything to be done to the house you could tell them here in writing. Do think of it ere you move; for REALLY I am of opinion you should stay quietly in the island. Of course I wish I could get over; but if wishes were horses, etc. etc.

"Have Davie and Walter caught any fish in the Nab yesterday? Tell Davie I expect a letter from him. Say to Walter that yesterday Carlo jumped into the carriage after me, and saw with me several patients. He usually mounted a chair at the side of each bed, and looked in. But Mrs. S. gave him too much encouragement. He leapt into bed altogether, and tramped upon a blister! which was very painful.

"Dr. Bennet has just come in to open the shark with me. I expect Marginlies to breakfast. He is here for a day with an Egyptian doctor. He is going to settle in London.—Love to all, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

"J. Y. SIMPSON.

"*Eight o'clock, Thursday.*"

"MY DEAREST JESSIE,—Got your Sunday's letter yesterday, and delighted to hear from you that all were so well. Everything goes on nicely here. I have been looking out for a headache (but keep excellently well), for I have been working

very busily, and scarcely with enough of sleep. Yesterday *beat* (as Clarke writes it) any day I ever yet saw in the house. Did not get out till half-past four; and the drawing-room actually filled beyond the number of chairs and seats! Have had a capital sleep, and got up to look at the ducks; but none laying this morning, so I write instead. To-day I have a fancy to run out to Bathgate, and I think I will. I wrote yesterday I might be.

"Yesterday dined with Miller, and Williamson, the Duke of Buccleuch's huntsman, enlightened us about dogs. Miller and I go to Hamilton Palace on Saturday. On Monday I have promised to dine with the Everards.

"My ducks won't lay any more eggs, at which I feel very chagrined. . . .

"I hope Davie and Walter still enjoy themselves as much as ever. They are, I doubt not, two very, very, very *busy* men. . . .

"Two salmon came, as presents, last week. I gave one to Mrs. Bennet.

"We are beginning a new batch of examinations at the College. *Such* a sleep as I had yesterday morning! I came home by the last Glasgow train, *very* tired. Tom came to waken me at eight, but I snored so that he did not. He called me at half-past nine. I don't think I had stirred from the moment I lay down. This morning I have been reading in bed since six. I did not rise till now (half-past seven), *because* there was no duck laying. Love to Mr. and Mrs. Petrie, Mina, and all.—Yours ever affectionately, J. Y. Simpson.

"*Monday morning, 9th July* [49."

CHAPTER X.

Illness—Consults Professor Syme—Continental Tour—Praise of his Colleagues—Lepers and Leper-Houses—Study of Astronomy—Reception of Strangers—Hospitality—Letters of Thanks—Liberality—Returned Fees—Scurrilous attack—Views of Locock, Carpenter, and Quain—Clairvoyance—Homœopathy—Controversy—Dr. Simpson's part in it—Interest in Social and Moral condition of Newhaven—Rev. J. Fairbairn—Cottage Hospitals—Late Marchioness of Bute—Village Churches—Professional Bickerings—Estrangement from Friends—Alienation from Professor Miller—Professor Retzius—Dr. Channing—Visit to Ireland.

In the spring of 1850 Dr. Simpson had a serious attack of illness. A poisoned finger led to inflammation and swelling of the hand and arm, and in a short time to the formation of an ugly abscess in the armpit. It soon appeared that an operation would be necessary. After a good deal of hesitation he agreed to put himself in the hands of the surgeon, and his old antagonist, Professor Syme, was called in. At first he had intended to ask his friend and colleague Professor Miller to operate; but Mrs. Simpson and others expressed a strong desire for Mr. Syme, and he yielded. I refer to this chiefly for the purpose of indicating the beginning of an estrangement between these distinguished men, which both regretted, and which led, as I believe, to a controversy that could hardly have occurred but for this. To ask a surgeon whom he had ever regarded as an unflinching opponent to undertake this operation, and to pass by one in every way most capable, and with whom he had ever been on terms of great intimacy, did seem as if he doubted his scientific skill and his dexterity as an operator. Yet he did not. But if Mr. Miller took offence, as Dr. Simpson be-

lieved he did, it is difficult to withhold one's sympathy from the surgeon.

The tidings of his illness rapidly spread, and many of the most distinguished practitioners hastened to assure him of their deep regret. Among these communications it is very pleasant to notice several from men with whom he had waged sharp controversy. Notes had passed between him and Dr. Montgomery of Dublin, during discussions about the use of ether and chloroform, and also in connexion with his letters to Dr. Collins, which had led to the expression of strong feeling, in strong words, on both sides. But the news of his illness no sooner reached Dublin than Dr. Montgomery wrote :—

"Merrion Square, 12*th Feb.* '50.

"My dear Sir,—A lady from Edinburgh has just told me that you had been dangerously ill, and had suffered much in consequence of some wound in the hand.

"I beg you will believe that I heard this with sincere regret, and will feel much gratified by your being able to tell me that you are convalescent.—Yours sincerely,

"W. F. Montgomery."

After the close of the session, Dr. Simpson left work for a few weeks for a tour on the Continent, which he greatly enjoyed. "On the Continent," he wrote to Mrs. Tootal, "I had a very happy journey, and have got quite a renewed stock of health. I saw most of the principal Universities in France, Germany, Holland, and Belgium, and everywhere received great—very great—kindness and attention. I met at Düsseldorf a German who knew you and Mr. Tootal, and begged to be remembered to you both ; but he did not tell me his name. I am going to trouble Mr. Tootal to inquire after some Roman matters at your York Museum. Jessie joins me in kindest, kindest regards. What had Miss B. to do writing 'anonymous letters'? Don't spare her. It is a kind of character I do hate."

In his continental tour he appears to have let others praise him, esteeming it his duty and delight to make known the work of his colleagues, even as, on his return, he reported to them the doings of their fellow-workers abroad :—

"Strasbourg, 3 *Mai* 1850.

"Monsieur et savant confrère,—J'ai la bonne fortune de vous annoncer la visite du célèbre Simpson, l'inventeur du chloroforme comme agent anesthétique. M. Simpson retourne en Angleterre et a voulu faire la connaissance d'un des illustres émules des A. Cooper, des Brodie, des Graefe, etc.

"Vous pourrez lui montrer vos remarquables résultats, et M. Simpson en racontera les merveilles à ses collègues, MM. Syme, Bennett, etc.

"Mille complimens à Monsieur votre fils, avec prière de ronger à l'envoi de l'appareil de sustention et de progression pour les amputés de l'articulation coro-fémorale.—Votre bien dèvoué et respectueux, C. Sedillot.

"Monsieur le Professeur Textor, Wurzbourg."

On his return home two subjects got much of his attention. One, the renewal of inquiries regarding Leprosy and Leper-houses, had close bearings on his professional walk. The other, Astronomy, had not. But, *De omni scibili* was still his motto, and he went on questioning all nature, and trying to interpret its sights and sounds. Most who visited 52 Queen Street, and witnessed the crowd of patients, the number of visitors from many parts of the world, the eager earnestness of practitioners to get a promise of a visit for a patient, or learned the multitude of enterprises, commercial, industrial, philanthropic, moral or religious, that day by day were pressed on his notice, would have thought him already too much burdened and engrossed to have the least time for anything else. But now, not satisfied with the descriptions which others gave of the starry sky, he wished to see for himself the grandeur and the glory, and to get deeper views into the wonderful works of God. The late Sir William Keith Murray

of Ochtertyre, an able and accomplished amateur astronomer, gave him much valuable information as to instruments, modes of manipulation, and the methods of observation. He visited Dr. Simpson's country-house, Viewbank, Trinity, pointed out the best site for an instrument-stand, and furnished a sketch-plan for its erection. Though little came of this attempt to add a practical acquaintance of Astronomy to his other acquirements, it showed how wide his desires after knowledge were. His renewed researches regarding Leprosy and Leper-houses bore more substantial fruit. From Dr. Charlton, Newcastle, Dr. Wylde, Dublin, Dr. Adams, Banchory, Dr. D. H. Robertson, Leith, and above all, from his learned friend the late Joseph Robertson, Esq., of the General Register House, Edinburgh, he received much interesting and valuable information. Additional traces of leper-houses and of legislative or municipal provision for the support of lepers, were found. Newcastle, Ipswich, Dublin, Leith, Dundee, Perth,[1] etc. etc., were added to his list of places where leper-houses had been.

A short time after Dr. Simpson's election to the Professorship, his house became noted for its hospitality, and continued to be so throughout his career. "He literally did the honours of Edinburgh." When a stranger handed his card or note of introduction, the usual invitation, after a few words of kindly welcome, was—"We breakfast at nine, lunch at two, dine at half-past six; come when it suits you, and we'll have a talk," or, "I'll show you something." And he meant him to come.

[1] Dr. Joseph Robertson forwarded the following extract from the "Kirk Session Register of Perth." It shows one of the sources to which Dr. Simpson turned for information :—

"4 *September* 1587.

"Compearit Andrew Merser, and according as he was appointit this day to produce his lettre or tak off the Lippermans craft, obeyit the same, and efter the tak vas red it vas found that his takis wer expyrit and outrun at Witsonday terme last bypast. Thairfoir appointis James Davistoun and Patrick Blair to confer with Andrew Merser to sie quhat he will augment of his gudwill to the vtilitie off the pur for the said Lipperland, and thai to report thair ansuer this day aucht dayis, and the said Andrew to be present."

Some who took the words as mere words of courtesy, and were unwilling to take up time which they saw was so precious, were often surprised on the street by the sudden halt of a carriage, rattling swiftly along, and the words, "You have not come to see me. Step in a minute." After a rapid drive to the houses of patients in various parts of the city, the new acquaintance was landed at lunch, amidst a motley crowd of artists and authors, patients and practitioners. Or, as one said when asked whom he had met, "Well, there were 'Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes, and Arabians,' and Americans besides!" That his genial attention and his open hospitality touched the hearts of multitudes, is manifest from the numerous letters of thanks forwarded to him. If the perusal of these letters took half as much of his time as it has taken of mine, his very kindness brought a heavy penalty in the gratitude it awoke. Out of hundreds of these communications, one or two, taken almost at random, are given below :—

DR. GEORGE ELLIOT, JUN., NEW YORK.

"I have often thought of writing to you, and have as often been deterred by my recollections of the tin case full of letters on your sideboard. But I can assure you that I have not forgotten you or Mrs. Simpson, and all your kindnesses, and that I shall always recollect with delight a visit to Europe which procured me the acquaintance of you and Sir Philip Crampton. I went leisurely on to London, stopping at York, Oxford, Leamington, etc. . . .

"I hope that you are well, and am sure that you are happy in any case. I fancy that you will read this disjointed letter at your country place, with a full view of the island mentioned in Macbeth. I have it and you before my eyes at this moment. Pray remember me very kindly to Mrs. Simpson, and tell her

that 'my heart is in Ayrshire, my heart is not here.' . . . Does your butler still continue to use the speaking-trumpet? I suppose that your house is still the same on Saturdays, with the exception of Mrs. S.'s absence—lunch and patients, doctors to ask advice, and doctors to borrow books, artists, drawing very little babies, and men whitened with plaster, bringing in the last cast, with the general hum enlivened by the butler's frequent whistle for a cab. That cab-stand should present you with a piece of plate. Well, good-bye, my dear Doctor; I wish you every success, and always count on me as one of your truest friends. Mother has mounted your bust in a prominent place, and I expect that there will be a pilgrimage to it of ladies, with undiscovered troubles."

PROFESSOR ED. E. PHELPS (DARTMOUTH COLLEGE).

"In parting with you at Edinburgh, I mentioned that it would be practicable for me to procure some statistics relative to the size of the fœtal head at birth in the black race. This I purpose to set about at once. Will you give me, at some leisure moment, or, rather, at some convenient time (for I perceived you had no such thing as leisure), such measurements as you would like to have made, and also any other information relating to the subject just mentioned. . . .

"In concluding, my dear sir, allow me to express (what I can but feebly do) the deep and heartfelt obligations I am under to you for the truly hospitable and friendly attentions which I received from yourself and family, and which, forming as it did my introduction to Great Britain, will ever make Scotland, and especially Edinburgh, seem its most pleasant part.

"Dr. Hitchcock begs me not to close without saying that he feels in an equal degree the kindness extended to himself."

DR. HORACE GREEN (NEW YORK).

"I have just returned from the Continent, and shall leave London to-morrow for Liverpool, to sail in the steamer (Atlantic) of the 20th for America.

"But I feel that I cannot return home without expressing the obligations I am under to you for your kind attentions to me while in Edinburgh.

"My visit to your city will remain among the happiest recollections of my life.

"I hope, my dear sir, you will yet visit us in America. You would receive a hearty, and, I trust, a gratifying welcome from our profession, to whom you have long been known.

"In your numerous engagements, I can hardly ask of you the favour of a correspondence, but if at any time you should have a moment of leisure, and should think of your foreign brethren, none will be more happy to hear from you."

DR. ARNETH (VIENNA).

"It is to-day a full year that I first entered your hospitable house. It is impossible to me to allow this day to fly without having presented to you and to your excellent lady my best thanks for all the kindness I received from you during my last stay in Edinburgh. Don't forget to send me your friends. I shall always be very happy to show them something of Vienna. But more than any other thing, I should like to see *you* here."

DR. OPPERT (BERLIN).

"I have long intended to write to you, and thank you for the kindness with which you behaved towards me. I see now how great was the advantage to study, under your kind assistance, some special subjects in which I was interested, and will never forget the agreeable hours I lived in your company.

"Our town and University enjoys now the presence of one clever man more, Dr. Virchow, on whom great hopes are placed.

"I hope your nephew is pleased with Leipzig, and will be so with Berlin, if he comes here; then, perhaps, I can be useful to him."

DR. KREIGER, BERLIN.

"I take the liberty of introducing to you the bearer, Dr. Wegner, military surgeon, who thinks of making a stay of some weeks in your delightful city in order to see your medical and other institutions, and to have the advantage of becoming acquainted with yourself. . . . I remember that high degree of kindness and civility, hospitality and hearty reception, I met with during my stay in Edinburgh."

DR. FAYE, CHRISTIANIA.

"It is an agreeable duty to me to send you a couple of lines now. About a month since I returned home.

"My dear Professor, were I to express my feelings of gratitude for your friendship during my last stay in Edinburgh, my bad English should be a too imperfect mean of communication. But I feel sure you will believe me sincere, when I repeat my last words to you: 'I shall never forget your kindness, and never, I hope, what I learnt from you.' I shall try to make it as useful for myself and others as possible. . . . I think I told you I possibly shall be engaged to go to Stockholm to attend our Princess-Royal in her confinement; and I may now add that, according to a formal note, I shall be off in a few days."

DR. PANTALEONI, ROME.

"I have been so long kept by the courteous attentions of my friends amongst the mountains of Scotland, that truly I am obliged to make my way home, as soon as possible, and by the shortest conveyance, through Germany. I shall be in Rome towards the middle of October next, and remember that you promised to let me know what would interest you most there, and what information could I afford to you to help your scientifical pursuits. . . .

"I meant to pay a visit yesterday to Lord Blantyre; but what unfortunate day is the Sunday for a tourist! No conveyance of any kind to be had, and besides (I do not know

why) always horrible weather on Sunday. And now I must start for Liverpool. Should you have the occasion of being there pray make my apologies. . . .

"I am ashamed to take so much of your valuable time; but I shall never forget the courteous attentions and unlimited kindness I received from you, and be sure I shall feel happy if you will put me in the way of being able to pay a slight return to you or any of your friends in Rome."

DR. CARPENTER, LONDON.

"The large experience I have had of your hospitality, as exercised not only towards myself, but to worthy members of our profession from all the world over, makes me bold to introduce to your kind notice Dr. Jackson of Boston, N.E., Professor of Pathological Anatomy in Harvard University, and nephew of the *old* Dr. Jackson, with whose interesting Memorials of his son you are doubtless acquainted."

In the outset of his career he was forced to be careful in the use of money. But no sooner had he floated into plenty, than his disregard for money for its own sake began to appear. The return of fees sent to him by patients increased in frequency. Sums of £30, £25, £10, and £5 were, in 1850 and 1851, in several cases returned without any indication of his motive in doing it. In some instances, as when sent by clergymen, this is intelligible, but in others it is impossible to determine what induced him. Increase of wealth seems to have brought a good deal of unrest with it. He was not content to allow his money to rest and increase in the usual quiet way. Like his own gifts, it had ever to get into activity, and go forth in search of increase. What had become his by work was required to work in turn. Thus the readiness with which he intrusted its care to others, if the prospect was held out to him that thereby a new product could be added to the industrial wealth of the country, or, by shipping, the commerce of the country extended. Speculations touching the distillation of oil from

Irish peat, or the conveyance of guano from islands before unknown, got his ready attention when proposed by men who were likely to keep free of risks. Repeatedly he suffered loss, but was never cast down. The next proposals found him as ready as ever for enterprise. To almost every other man this would have been fruitful of anxiety and distraction. It was not so to him. The hour after any scheme of this kind was adopted, and the money intrusted to others, it seemed to pass from his mind. He was working, and the rewards of his work were sent forth on what he esteemed useful work also. This satisfied him, though, as steward of his growing wealth, it should not. Yet his hospitable table, his generosity in meeting the wants of others, his readiness to help those in need, and the frequency with which fees were returned, all showed that the mere love of money did not lead him into undertakings like those now referred to.

In September 1851 a letter bearing the pseudonym "Isaac Irons, M.D.," appeared in the *Lancet*, containing a most scurrilous attack on Dr. Simpson. "Controversy equalizes fools and wise men—and the fools know it," says an American author. Had Dr. Simpson remembered this he would have passed the epistle as men do decaying carcases. They meddle not with them, lest they should thereby spread pestilence. His friend Dr. Locock recommended, in the outset, that the evil communication should be left unheeded, adding, "I make it a rule not to have any warfares. I have stood the hardest work formerly, as well as any one, but I should have been dead long ago if I had L.'s pugnacious propensities." But the views taken by other professional friends, and the wide circulation of the letters, led him to notice it. The letter itself is too nasty to be produced here ;

"He pares the apple who would cleanly feed."

It was, I believe, traced to a London practitioner. Dr. Simpson was advised by many to take the matter into a court of law. Meanwhile he wrote a calm and dignified reply to the *Lancet*,

which "Irons" noticed. The second note led to other communications, which were welcomed by Dr. Simpson's friends as in every way worthy of his great name and high position.

"London, *Sept.* 26, 1851.

"My dear Simpson,—I have read and re-read Dr. Irons's letter, and have come to the *decided conviction* that it would be much better for you to *leave it alone.* I do not think it can do you any real harm, however annoying it may be to be the subject of such vicious slanders; and I much doubt if there be anything (so cunningly has the attack been devised) that would afford a *thoroughly secure* foundation for a charge of libel; and unless there be such, it would be far better not to go into court at all. It is quite a different case from that with which I have been concerned, that of a charge of adulteration, which simply involves the question of its truth or falsehood, the charge itself being distinctly and unmistakeably libellous. You know that I have undergone all this ordeal myself, and am not sorry to have done so, since it makes me more callous for the future. . . . Nevertheless I have stood it all, and have no reason to believe that my personal or scientific character has in the least degree suffered in the estimation of any one for whose good opinion I care. Now I have only had the *mens conscia recti* to fall back upon, whilst you have not only this, but your professional income, of I don't know how many thousands a year; and if that be not *solid* consolation, I do not know what is. Any one who contrasts *your* letter on the preceding page with Dr. Irons's, must be struck with the contrast. Nothing could be in *better* taste than *yours*, nothing in *worse* than *his.* I am very glad that they came into such close proximity. I will do my best about the *Chronicle.*—Yours most faithfully,

"W. B. Carpenter."

"23 Hanley Street, London, *Oct.* 6, 1851.

"Dear Dr. Simpson,—Many thanks for your kind note. I had very real pleasure in the part I took in the *Lancet* matter;

for satisfactory as it is at all times to oppose injustice, it was particularly so to resent so gross an instance of it towards yourself, to whom I, as one of many, owe very different obligations. Your last letter has been most fully appreciated by all with whom I have conversed since its appearance, and 'Irons' —'Red-hot Irons'—is almost everywhere recognised under his pseudonym. Personally I don't know that I ever enjoyed anything more than the point of your letter, which fixes Irons himself with one of the five cases. A hearty roar displaced the dumps which a dull October day had created. I heard this morning from one of the Wakleys that they had not seen nor heard of Irons since. Wakley really has shown very creditable feeling in the matter.—Dear Dr. Simpson, with great respect, believe me, yours very sincerely, RICHARD QUAIN."

The light shed by Dr. Simpson's discoveries and practice was too bright for "Isaac Irons, M.D.," and he tried to cast the shadow of a not noble individuality over it. "The mind of a bigot is like the pupil of the eye; the more light you pour on it, the more it contracts." "It need only be said of these assaults that, very far exceeding, as they usually did, the limits of temperate discussion, they were simply the exaction of the historic tax leviable on pre-eminent talent when so employed as to render its possessor a conspicuous public benefactor."[1]

> "He who ascends to mountain tops shall find
> The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;
> He who surpasses or subdues mankind
> Must look down on the hate of those below."

I have already referred to Dr. Simpson's early views of Mesmerism, the expectations he began to form of its use, especially in surgical operations, and, later, his renouncing all solid hope of this. He acknowledged that there were many things connected with it worthy the attention of medical men and psychologists. There were aspects of truth about it that made the quackery current. But when it assumed the ter-

[1] Note from Dr. Turner, Keith.

minology of science, and demanded regard as a branch of so-called Electro-Biology, he saw that something had to be done to open the eyes of its credulous followers, and to serve as a beacon to others. The pretended faculty of clairvoyance was claimed for those susceptible of the trance. One or two men of acknowledged ability (Professor Gregory, for example) were firm believers. When "Isaac Irons, M.D." had his communication smuggled into the columns of the *Lancet* (Wakley, the editor, was then out of town), he not only charged Dr. Simpson with work "profligate," "brutal," and subversive "of established practice," but twitted him with his inconsistency, in that while denouncing Homœopathy he was encouraging Mesmerism, which is as bad. "But for this inconsistent conduct it is impossible to believe that the rampant quackery in the University and among the population of Edinburgh could ever have reached the present disgraceful position." All this led Dr. Simpson to attempt something better fitted to define his views and attitude than the longest discourse ever could. The following document indicates the steps he took. The challenge was never taken up, but its publication fell like a death-blow on the clairvoyants and their friends, learned and unlearned.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY.

"SIR,—On the 2d of April last, when Dr. Wood read a paper to the Society on the subject of Electro-Biology, I expressed my opinion on the subject at some length; and according to the report of the meeting, as given in the Monthly Journal for May (p. 487), I concluded the observations which I made with the following remarks:—'Dr. Simpson stated that he totally disbelieved in any of the so-called higher phenomena of animal magnetism—as lucidity, transference of the senses, clairvoyance, etc. If a person could see with the tips of his fingers or the pit of his stomach, as was averred, it would be an enormous fact, and would require an enormous amount of

proof to substantiate it as a fact. But the evidence adduced was generally of a very imperfect kind, and melted down before accurate inquiry. He had such a conviction of this, that he offered to place in the President's hands £100, which he would give to Dr. Macdonald for the scheme for which he (Dr. M.) was lecturing, if Dr. Macdonald could bring any clairvoyant who could read a line of Shakespeare, or two or three words out of the dictionary, which Dr. S. would shut up in a box. If there was any truth in clairvoyance, why should not a clairvoyant be able to gain for Dr. Macdonald this sum of money?'

"In September last, in consequence of circumstances which it is unnecessary to allude to here, I wrote to the editor of the *Lancet* as follows:—'To show you the sincerity of my belief, let me put this same proposition, viz., the one first stated to the Medico-Chirurgical Society, in another shape. I will, if you will allow me, place five such boxes or packets (each of them containing a line of Shakespeare) in your hands, and in the hands of a small committee of medical men, whom you and I shall conjointly agree upon, and who with you shall be judges, and make all the necessary arrangements; and I now offer through you £500 for the reading of those included five lines by any clairvoyant. Further, as my pen is in my hand, let me name at once, on my part, your fellow-citizens, Dr. Sharpey, Dr. Locock, Dr. Williams, Dr. Todd, and Dr. Carpenter, or any two or more of them, to adjudge the matter, with an equal number named by you. Perhaps you will agree with me in thinking that, in settling a question of this nature, such a test and trial is better than any other five hundred arguments.'

"The preceding offer has not, as far as I have observed, been accepted by the editor of the *Lancet;* and in consequence I write to ask as a favour of you and the Society, that you and their Council would be so good as to take charge of these packets for the purpose named in the preceding extract, and to make such arrangements at my expense as you think fit, for allowing any supposed clairvoyants to have a proper oppor-

tunity of testing their alleged power with the view of gaining the sum in question.

"I would only beg to make one suggestion, viz., that wherever else you may deem it right to advertise the offer, you advertise it at least in the pages of the *Zoist*, that it may come under the eyes of all those who are most deeply interested in the so-called study of animal magnetism.—Yours very truly,

"J. Y. S.

"52 Queen Street, 19*th Nov.* 1851."

About this time Mr. ——, a noted mesmerist, was performing in Edinburgh, with his daughter as a medium, who, it was alleged, could read anything written in a sealed paper, or shut up in a box. Dr. Simpson and his friend the Rev. Dr. Guthrie went to a *séance*, carrying with them a sealed box prepared by them for the occasion. At a convenient opportunity Dr. Simpson challenged the clairvoyant to state what were the contents of the box, and to read the writing enclosed. Mr. —— objected, but the audience insisted. An attempt was made. The medium said the box contained money. It was opened, and found to contain millet seed, with a scrap of paper on which "humbug" was written. The failure was complete.

Dr. Simpson's influence over a nervous patient when he first meddled with mesmerism has been referred to. His mesmerizing powers were frequently shown in the case of another patient of the same sort. The spell was thrown over Mrs. C., and she was promised a new bonnet if she could waltz past an imaginary line he drew on the floor. She made an earnest effort to win the bonnet, but fell in the attempt! The same lady, when passing into the trance, was commanded not to speak till the spell was removed. She tried to speak, but in vain, and grew very angry at the failure of her repeated attempts. On another occasion, when suffering from severe toothache, she sent for Dr. Simpson, and was relieved by being thrown into the trance. Leaving her in this condition, it was his intention to call an hour or two afterwards. In the mean-

time, however, he was summoned to the country, and the spell-bound patient was left in her helpless condition, to the no small horror of her household. Such are specimens of the alleged incidents which, during the brief period of the mesmeric fever, formed exciting subjects of conversation in the higher Edinburgh circles. Whether the physician in such cases laughed in his sleeve at the credulity of both sexes, or the fair patients who lent themselves for the experiments felt how easily philosophers can be imposed on, may, without much hurt to science, be left unsettled.

The adoption of the principles of Homœopathy by one or two Edinburgh physicians, led to one of the keenest discussions in the records of medical controversy. In 1844, Dr. Henderson, Professor of Pathology, became a homœopathist, and by degrees began to carry out his views in his practice as a physician. This gave much offence to most of his colleagues. In 1851 they resolved to take active measures to make their views known, and, if possible, to put a stop to the progress of this medical heresy. As the majority of them were practitioners, it was impossible not to notice the growth of the new views, or not to hear of the wonderful cures wrought by Homœopathy where Allopathy had signally failed. It was a phase of the old story described by Crabbe :—

> " And then in many a paper through the year,
> Must cures and cases, oaths and proofs appear ;
> Men snatch'd from graves, as they were dropping in,
> Their lungs cough'd up, their bones pierced through their skin ;
> Their liver all one scirrhus, and their frame
> Poison'd with evils which they dare not name ;
> Men who spent all upon physicians' fees,
> Who never slept, nor had a moment's ease,
> Are now as roaches sound, and all as brisk as bees."

The matter ripened quickly. On the 15th of June the Medical Faculty of the University of Edinburgh passed unanimously the following resolutions :—

" 1. That the public profession of Homœopathy by the Professor of General Pathology is inconsistent with the efficient

discharge of the various duties which belong to that Chair, and is calculated to injure the University as a Medical School.

"2. That the Senatus Academicus be requested to transmit a copy of this resolution to the patrons of the University, together with the expression of a hope, on the part of the Medical Faculty, that some step may be taken to avert the danger thus threatened to the University."

Pamphlets, letters to the newspapers, articles in public journals, and speeches at professional Societies, fell thick as autumn leaves. The combatants seemed to rejoice in the strife. One of the pamphlets got special attention. It was on the side of Dr. Henderson, and was entitled, "The New Test Act, or a Recent Conspiracy against the Medical Practitioners of Homœopathy." This pamphlet was for a time generally ascribed to the late Dr. Samuel Brown; but he early denied having had any hand in it:—

"Dear Dr. Simpson,—I heard accidentally last night that you attribute the *New Test Act* to me. I did not write it; nor did I know one thing about it till I received a copy from the author, who is a lawyer. Far from being ashamed of my adhesion to Homœopathy as a part of medicine, I wish neither credit nor discredit from what I have no hand in. You are one of the few men with whom I wish to stand, if not well, at least no worse than I am, being yours, as of old,

"Samuel Brown."

Dr. Simpson threw himself with great heart into the battle. He believed the principles of Homœopathy to be unscientific, irrational, and dangerous to the life of the patient. He saw, too, the charm they were likely to have for nervous patients, and with characteristic promptness he resolved to do his part thoroughly in the combat. An opportunity soon occurred.

At their first meeting for the winter session 1851-52, the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh unanimously passed a resolution of a similar character to those already mentioned.

Professor Syme moved,—"That the public profession of Homœopathy shall be held to disqualify for being admitted or remaining a member of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh."

Dr. Simpson seconded the motion. An outline of his speech is reported in the *Monthly Journal of Medical Science* for December 1851 :—

"For one, Dr. Simpson rejoiced that the Colleges had taken up the subject, and set the matter on its right footing, by making the question of meeting homœopathists not a question longer left to the responsibility and importunities of individuals, but a question which the profession had fixed and settled in their *corporate* capacity.

"The resolutions of the Colleges would, he believed, be doubly useful, by not only determining for the future the proper line of duty of the profession towards homœopathists; but by showing also to the homœopathists their exact position in relation to the profession. . . . In passing therefore—and it is to be hoped, unanimously—such a motion as that proposed by Mr. Syme, we, the members of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, show our anxiety and desire to be rid of the professional presence of homœopathists in all our institutions, by showing them our determination to be rid of them in those places from which we have an undoubted right of enforcing their exclusion. . . .

"Dr. S. further argued for the propriety of this motion on another ground, viz., that the presence of homœopathists at our Society, even if they did come to our meetings, was not at all calculated to promote that principal and leading object of the Medico-Chirurgical Society,—the cultivation and advancement of medical science and knowledge. For he held that no man, or set of men, could in any degree aid in effecting this object, who entertained principles such as those which form the basis of the homœopathic belief. We were as much justified in asking those who had taken up a belief in the follies of Hahne-

mann and his *Organon* to withdraw from our Society, as a Christian community would be justified in expelling those of its members who came to believe in the follies of Joe Smith and the Mormon Bible. These two heresies—the homœopathic and the Mormonite—seemed, in fact, to have many points in common, though the one belonged to medicine, and could only be properly judged of by physicians; and the other belonged to theology, and could only properly be judged of by clerical men. They were both equally wild. Some homœopathists profess Hahnemann to have been inspired; as the Mormonites hold Smith to have been. Both heresies also were extending, it was true; but that was no evidence of the value of either. It has been alleged that we have no confession of faith in medicine,—no standard by which we can possibly judge, as clerical bodies do, of the amount of error and deviation of those members of the profession who, from time to time, may choose to set at nought the common principles of that profession. But we have a confession of faith, and a standard by which we *can* judge such men, namely, THE STANDARD OF COMMON SENSE. . . . All men can at once, because without any great intellectual effort, see through the foolishness and impossibility of the idea of two and two making five, but they do not equally see through the absurdity and impossibility of the more complicated, but equally ridiculous idea, of the billionth or decillionth of a grain of oyster-shell, or chamomile, or belladonna, or the like, having any possible effect whatever upon the economy, for, resting contented with the mere name, they never once think or dream of what in reality a billionth or a decillionth amounts to. Medical jurists and lawyers know of no poison, however strong and powerful, the billionth or decillionth of which would in the least degree affect a man or harm a fly. They tell us that the mere division of their drugs invests them with 'tremendous' power; but they could not injure or affect the frailest insect with one of their 'tremendous' billionths or decillionths. For

what, in fact, is a billionth of a grain? Why, if a single grain of sulphur were divided, as the homœopathists use it and other drugs, into billionths, and if our common parent Adam, when called into existence some 6000 years ago, had then begun swallowing a billionth every second, and if he had been permitted to live up to the present time doing nothing but swallowing night and day sixty billionths every minute, he would as yet have completed only a small part of his task. It would require him to work and swallow at the same rate for 24,000 years yet to come, in order to finish one single grain of a drug, which has little effect on his present descendants in doses of twenty-five or fifty grains. Yet the homœopathists believe that a few of the sulphur billionths which Adam would have swallowed during these 30,000 years would cure, forsooth, an attack of jaundice. If we appeal to our standard—*the standard of common sense*—should not men holding principles of such unmitigated ridiculousness be requested to withdraw from this and other Medical Societies? But a billionth was, after all, only the sixth dilution of a grain. Homœopathists have dilutions far more refined, and doses far more infinitesimal than that. Some amongst them allege that drugs should always be used in their thirtieth dilution, or in decillionths, and Hahnemann averred that even the smell of such a dose is enough. When they speak of the decillionth of a grain, they seem little to reckon what a decillionth amounts to. For it is a sum the mere figures of which can scarcely give us any conception of its infinitesimal amount, viz.,—

1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000.

The world is computed to contain at the present time some nine hundred millions of human beings. If all these nine hundred millions of human beings had lived during the past six thousand years, and each of them had swallowed, every moment of their existence, a decillionth of a grain, such as the homœopathists use, they would not during these six thousand years have finished one single grain; nay, one grain would, in

fact, suffice them all for millions and millions of years to come. . . .

"One remark of Mr. Syme regarding the number of homœopathic practitioners in Edinburgh reminded Dr. Simpson of a curious feature in homœopathic practice among us. He was not sure of how many practitioners of Homœopathy we had in Edinburgh: but they were all conversant with the fact that there were three homœopathic drug-shops in the town. That fact was in itself a significant and illustrative fact. He did not know the number of drugs that homœopathists used, but he did not suppose that they exceeded 250 or 300 separate articles. He was not aware what a grain of each might cost; but he imagined not above a penny, or two at most, on the average. And one single grain, in even their fourth or fifth dilutions, would, of course, be sufficient during any one druggist's lifetime, not only for a whole town such as Edinburgh, but for a whole universe; while a grain of a drug divided into quintillionths or decillionths might in truth serve an entire race during an entire geological epoch. A homœopathic apothecary's stock in trade could not consequently well exceed a few shillings, or a few pounds at most, and need not surely require renewal during the longest lifetime. And yet these same homœopathic dilutions seem convertible, through an adequate amount of credulity on the part of the public, into annual incomes sufficient for the maintenance of three thriving drug establishments! . . .

"Nor did it seem necessary that the globules of sugar of milk should go even through the form of being medicated with their supposed quadrillionths, quintillionths, etc., of the drug whose name they bore. At least it had been averred that some in England who affected to manufacture these medicated globules on the large scale, had found that the sugar of milk, of which these globules were composed, answered just as well with or without a dip in the pretended dilutions. And, as far as regarded the patient and the disease, it mattered nothing

what globule was given—whether one of charcoal or of arsenic. They were both so diluted as, of course, to be entirely inefficacious : and all the drugs and globules in a homœopathic medicine-box being rendered equally null and innocent by their previous reduction, any one of them could readily and successfully replace any other. . . .

"There was another class of practitioners who ought, he thought, certainly to be included in the category of those whose names should be removed from the list of members. He alluded to such practitioners as were not simple-minded, but sincere homœopathists. He alluded to those who pretended to be homœopathists, but acted as allopathists,—who doctored people according as people themselves wished, either with drachms of drugs, or billions of a grain of the same, who wished to be considered homœopathists, but, as had been often detected, drugged their globules and tinctures with active doses of the most powerful medicines ; who spread out the snare of homœopathy as a golden man-trap to catch credulous and trusting patients, and afterwards either openly or surreptitiously applied to them all the usual means employed in the armentarium of rational medicine. Some men pretended they could honestly and honourably mix up the two practices. Most physicians naturally doubted whether any man could in honour and honesty combine such incompatible incongruities. Neither any true homœopath nor any true allopath would give this spurious set credit for their integrity of purpose and principle. If any such were members of the Society, let them certainly and undoubtedly be requested to retire. . . ."

Dr. Simpson afterwards published a pamphlet on the same side. When the third edition of this was called for, it appeared as an octavo volume of nearly three hundred pages, dedicated to "Dr. William Stokes, Regius Professor of Physic in the University of Dublin." It is entitled, "Homœopathy : its Tenets and Tendencies." The volume contains an extraordinary amount of information, and bears the marks of great

painstaking and immense labour. He discovers all the joints in the homœopath's harness, and sends his arrows home with right good-will. The work was highly appreciated by all who took an interest in the progress of medical science, and in sound principles of medical practice. True, all were not convinced. "There are," observes Arnaud, "no absurdities too groundless to find supporters. Whoever determines to deceive the world, may be sure of finding people who are willing enough to be deceived; and the most absurd follies always find minds to which they are adapted."

FROM DR. CARPENTER.

"Many thanks for your homœopathic *settler*, which I received a few days ago. As Carlyle said the other day about the spirit-rapping, 'These coruscations of human fatuity are quite appalling.' Doubtless you will agree with Faraday, in his letter in the *Times* on table-turning, that there must be something wrong in our educational methods, if people who are accounted sensible and discriminating give themselves up to such absurdities."

FROM DR. NELIGAN.

"I was unable even to look at your extraordinary book on Homœopathy until this day, so busy have I been in getting out the May number of my Journal, which is but finished. And I have now but skimmed through it, yet I cannot let my first spare moment pass without thanking you for such an addition to the bulwarks of the profession against quackery. It is truly well and ably done, as I shall take occasion to say in my next Journal. I mean, however, to notice it but very shortly. Homœopathy does not thrive amongst us, chiefly, *I* think, because *we* rather treat it with silent contempt.—Like other abominations, it thrives on abuse very often."

FROM DR. KILGOUR, ABERDEEN.

"I'll tell you a story. An old and eccentric, but much

respected friend of mine, the late Rev. Dr. Kidd, one of our Hebrew Professors, once received a presentation of a book on a very abstruse subject, which he read patiently, but without making head or tail of it, as we say. And when the Dr. mentioned the circumstance he added,—'But I was a match for the fellow: I sent him in return a copy of my work on the Trinity.'

"Now the moral of this is not that your large work is to me incomprehensible, or that I think my own one runs into the mystical and unintelligible, but that as you sent me one on a subject which I scarcely think was worthy your great talents and acquirements, so I send you one which, *magna componere parvis*, or as compared with your accomplished and learned treatise, is a very trifling and incomplete exercise on a most important national matter.

"You attempt to reason fools out of their folly, and I to convert statesmen. I am not sure that either of us will succeed; and we might have done more good by something in the jog-trot line of endeavouring to enlighten our brethren in practical matters in the orthodox walk of our profession."

FROM DR. KREIGER, BERLIN.

"I acknowledge your great work on Homœopathy. I read it with astonishment. It is wonderful that a gentleman of your overflowing occupations could ever find the time to write a book on a subject so widely different from your usual studies."

The following note, among many others from non-professional men, gratified Dr. Simpson greatly:—

"Observatory, Armagh.

"My dear Sir,—I hope you will excuse this intrusion for the sake of its motive.

"Some weeks since, in Dublin, talking of Homœopathy, a medical gentleman who was present asked me if I knew your work on the subject, and lent it to me. I found in it all my own opinions so powerfully expressed, and, as it seems to me, so irresistibly proved, that I am certain it would be an im-

portant benefit to society if you would publish it in a form a little more condensed, so that it might get into general circulation. I cannot conceive any person not labouring under monomania who can read it without being convinced, but its size will be with many an excuse for not reading it at all.

"Within the last few days a dear and precious friend has fallen a victim to this delusion. He was attacked apparently with gastritis, and doctored himself with globules till relief was impossible. I often argued with him on the emptiness of his system, but in vain, and I now feel that had I known the facts which I have learned from your book, I might perhaps have averted an event which I and many more feel as a great calamity.—Believe me, yours sincerely,

"T. R. Robinson, D.D."

The variety of the topics contained in this work makes it difficult to give a brief summary of its contents. Dr. Simpson shows:—"1. That both the profession on the one hand, and Hahnemann himself on the other, utterly repudiate the compatibility of the two systems—Homœopathy and scientific Medicine—the principles and practice of which are as much opposed to each other as light to darkness, virtue to vice; thus exposing the knavery of those who profess to believe in and to practice *both*. 2. That Hahnemann himself very rarely, if ever, administered to his patients anything but small grains of sugar; and he confessed he did this 'for the sake of keeping up in the patient's mind the firm belief that each powder contains a particular dose of some medicine.' This, indeed, has long been known to the profession, and an account of it appeared more than twelve months ago in the *Court Journal*. 3. That, except at Vienna, Homœopathy is now comparatively little heard of in Germany and France; and that, notwithstanding Leipsic is the head-quarters of this doctrine, the Homœopathic Hospital of that city, a small house in the suburbs, contains only eight beds, of which Mr. Lee, who lately visited it, found only two or

three occupied; and that it was never sanctioned by any individual of eminence in the profession. 4. That the theory of Homœopathy is never carried out in practice, and indeed never can be, from the natural impossibility of doing so. 5. That, although different effects are theoretically said to be produced by different dilutions, yet homœopathists themselves testify to effects quite the same from all dilutions. 6. That the supposed statistical evidence in favour of homœopathic practice is founded on false and disingenuous returns. 7. That all attempts to obtain physical proofs either of the activity, or even of the existence, of the drugs said to be contained in the infinitesimal doses, have failed. Homœopathists have not been able to show by the highest magnifying powers of the solar microscope, by the 'magnetoscope,' or 'new magnetic indicator,' or by any other means, the existence of the smallest quantity of medicine in any of their preparations. The 'magnetoscope' has, however, revealed much that one would scarcely have expected to exist, of the effects and vagaries of human credulity. 8. That there is no foundation whatever for the leading principle of homœopathy, *Similia similibus curantur*, except that which is grounded on a gross perversion of medical facts. 9. That the writings and the practice of different homœopathists are so full of contradictions and inconsistencies, that it is impossible either to harmonize or reconcile them, except on an hypothesis fatal to their pretensions."

The scientific argument and the immense number of details of matters of fact are illustrated, relieved, and have a piquant flavour given them, by apt anecdotes, ironical appeals, and flashes of wit, or words of quiet humour.

Dr. Simpson had pleasure in turning away for a time from the strife of tongues in the controversy on Homœopathy, and giving himself to work which, if it lay not more to his hand, took at least a firmer hold of his heart than ever this contest against what he held to be professional quackery had done.

The proximity of View Bank to the fishing village of New-

haven brought him frequently in contact with the able and devoted Free Church minister of the place, Mr. Fairbairn—"oure ain Mr. Fairbairn," as Dr. Simpson was wont to say, using the words of the villagers. With him Dr. Simpson consulted regarding the moral and sanitary condition of the district. His usual method of beginning an investigation was put in force. Some friends were employed to get statistics showing the number of houses and their inhabitants, the number of places licensed for the sale of intoxicating drink, the quantity of liquor sold, the probable amount consumed by the inhabitants, or by the strangers who at that period crowded to the village on Sabbaths and Fast Days, the rate of mortality, and the most frequent causes of death. When the information was spread out before the minister, he wrote to Dr. Simpson :—"In fact I am thankful to say that these statements have more a reference to the *past* generation, or at least the *passing*, than to that which is coming on the stage. Clearer views of the evil of intemperance are beginning to dawn, and I have reason to know that the quantity of spirits sold is diminishing, while that of provisions is increasing.

"The efforts that are at present made by the people to build the new church, and the noble sacrifices undergone to have it substantial and handsome, afford the most agreeable as well as convincing proofs that the tide is beginning to turn. May the Lord further the efforts making by yourself and others to avert this national plague!"

In the beginning of 1852, when speaking to the late Marchioness of Bute on the subject of Cottage Hospitals, she said,—"they might be put up at little expense if iron were used instead of stone and lime; I have been making inquiries about the price of this material for farm out-houses." With that happy power of leading others to take an interest in good work by setting the work in the light of an obligation conferred on himself, he got her Ladyship to procure him plans and estimates of buildings of corrugated iron. He kept hold of this

suggestion. Some years later, when I brought before him the necessity of having a church erected in a mining village near Bathgate, he said, "Why not put up one of corrugated iron? You can have a place erected which will serve as a church and schoolhouse, 50 feet by 20 feet inside, and 15 feet high at the walls, for £460. Then, if in fifty years the coal and iron come to an end, as you fear, the miners could take their church on their backs to the next diggings!" The letters from Lady Bute, of whom he used to say "she is one of the best of women," show how he had been led to think of the moveable church, but very few men could have thus readily from memory furnished the details of the size and expense of such erections.

Improved dwellings for working men, village flower-shows as a means of interesting cottagers in garden work, and cottage convalescent homes for the poor when recovering from illness in hospital or in their own houses, all now got his time and attention and offers of help. He even comes under an obligation for £25, towards a guarantee fund for establishing *The Bulwark, or Reformation Journal* under the auspices of the Scottish Reformation Society. And general science was not neglected. He was questioning nature touching the presence of entozoa in the *fœtus*, and speculating on the migrations of some of these forms. He was examining eagerly the teeth of all the old skulls brought before him in his archæological studies, with the view of ascertaining, from the varieties of wearing presented by the teeth, what food had been used by the primeval inhabitants of various districts. And long before Mr. Darwin had written anything on "Animals under Domestication," he was using the able editor of the *North British Agriculturist*, Mr. Charles Stevenson, to obtain information for him from breeders of stock on some of the points of greatest interest, afterwards brought out by Mr. Darwin. Mr. Stevenson's notes, the communications of Mr. Douglas of Athelstaneford, and others, would form a not uninteresting chapter in the history of variation of species under domestication.

The reader must have already perceived, that when Dr. Simpson took up a well-defined position in a controversy, he held it bravely against all comers. When convinced that he was right, he was utterly immoveable. Neither argument nor appeal could lead him to change his views. Even old ties of friendship and the memory of kind intercourse failed to modify his estimate of the heavy blame incurred by all who cast reproach on the profession, by charges brought against his own skill and methods of treatment. His very habits of archæological research were carried into "the last Edinburgh quarrel." Gossip works much harm in every profession, because those to whom it speaks seldom see its meanness, especially if they have no faculty for it themselves. An untender expression, uttered by one professional man regarding another, has its meaning intensified when repeated. An unfair criticism, made by one from whom we have been recently estranged, becomes in our estimate a crime when reported by a third party.

Familiar objects appear distorted and exaggerated when seen in a haze; but no mist ever worked such apparent change on material objects as the atmosphere of suspicion and prejudice does in morals. A hasty expression has the weight of a long premeditated utterance assigned to it, and a thoughtless act becomes a long, carefully weighed, and deliberate deed. Thus old friends are separated by weak and garrulous interlopers, and the devil gets his work done to most purpose by those who are most sure *they* at least are not doing it. These remarks are suggested by much that has come under my notice in the records of Dr. Simpson's work. In all such cases he had no rest till he got to the bottom of an evil report. He went straight to his work, and with steady determination kept close to the track, till he had run the slander down. Evidence was sifted, witnesses were interrogated, and facts were set in lights which no obliquity of vision could mistake. One can at once sympathize with a man, to whom the profession of his choice was so dear, and to whom its ardent and painstaking pursuit

had brought all he held precious, being jealous over his own honour and good repute in it. It was everything to him. With one exception, all the great trials of his public professional life sprang from charges made against his skill in the treatment of some difficult case. Some men, conscious of right, and knowing that the charge was unmerited, would have held on their way without giving heed to unfounded charges. It would have saved Dr. Simpson much anxiety and pain to have done this. Some will hold it a defect in his character that he did not.

Reference has already been made to his estrangement from Professor Miller. All who knew and loved both ever mourned over this. Perhaps Dr. Simpson too hastily assumed, that Mr. Miller had taken deep offence when Mr. Syme was called in to operate on the abscess. Be this as it may, it was held by him to be certain. And when rumours reached him that Mr. Miller had spoken, as he believed, unhandsomely of the way he had treated a difficult case, he believed the report all the more readily because of the view he took of Mr. Miller's feelings towards him. I have read and re-read the elaborate documents in this case, not assuredly as a partisan. My love and admiration for the frank, manly, high-principled Christian surgeon while he lived, and my loving regard now for his memory, make partisanship impossible. But it seems to me that the surgeon meddled with a matter with which he had no concern. He should not have discussed the case, even in the circle of his intimate friends—a circle in which some moved who ought to have been grateful to Dr. Simpson, but were not, and others, who were notoriously at variance with him on the thorny subject of Homœopathy. In the introduction to the printed correspondence Dr. Simpson says:—

"In consequence of Professor Miller's published statement, I feel myself most reluctantly and most painfully compelled to place the following letters in the hands of my medical brethren. I submit them without a word of comment.

"In deference to the feelings of the husband and friends of the patient to whom the letters refer, I wish, from the bottom of my heart, that I could feel it possible to act otherwise with any due regard to my professional reputation, to myself, and to my family. All, however, medical and non-medical, who have talked to me on the subject, have unanimously assured me of one point, that the whole case has been already made so very public by others, that it is impossible to make it more public now; though it may be made (as I hope it is in these letters) far more correct." . . .

The husband of the patient, himself a medical man, wrote to Dr. Simpson:—"I cannot tell with what feelings of indignation I have just been informed of conduct imputed to two medical men, in having dared to pry into the circumstances connected with the last illness of my lamented wife. The names of these individuals I have not heard, nor, need I say, have I any desire to learn them. . . .

"Let me repeat here my grateful thanks to you for your very kind and careful attendance on my dear wife, and beg of you to command my testimony should you require it. But surely your professional reputation can well afford to treat with contempt the insinuations of men who could lower themselves as these two have done; and, above all, let me earnestly entreat of you to rescue my dear wife's name from being made a subject of public discussion and controversy."

Some of his brethren pointed to a court of law as the proper place for vindication, but he was better advised. It is to the report of this that Dr. Carpenter refers in the following note:—

"So you must battle it out among yourselves, and edify us peaceful Londoners with your amiable discussions. Are we to have a case of *Miller* v. *Simpson,* or *Simpson* v. *Miller,* arising out of 'the last Edinburgh quarrel'? Or have you made it up and embraced as two good Free Churchmen ought to do?"

Old friends and fellow-students failed not to keep him

abreast of the most recent information touching their own work and interests, or the doings of the circle in which they moved. These communications are not, however, always so cheery as those from Sir James Eyre :—

"11 Lower Brook St., *Feb.* 21*st*, 1852.

"My dear Simpson,—You have not used an old friend and fellow-pupil well, for you never said a word in favour of his book, 'Practical Remarks, 2d Edition,' in your periodical last year. You will receive, if you have not already, a work, fresh from the press, whose title is 'The Stomach and its Difficulties,' by Sir James Eyre, M.D. Edin. etc. etc. etc.' Being a sexagenarian, although I was made a doctor—*hating operative surgery*—on the same day that you were capped yourself, I have given up Midwifery after thirty-eight years of it, and jumping out of bed, half asleep, in the winter at night, so that I can devote myself now to some of the 'difficulties' of the human frame; and I shall be surprised, indeed, if you do not pat on the back this child of my old age, you and I having been boys together.

"I still have a *very* satisfactory practice, and capital position in this village, *caring for nobody, and yet caring for all.* But I could live without any business at all. I always give *you* the good word, and you have backbiters in London, as who has not? and you will remember that you thought my testimonial, when you were elected a Professor to my dear Alma Mater, good enough to print; so, as one good turn deserves another, do not let the very jealous neighbours of mine say 'that the Scotch never help the English.' I know better than that by the happy experience of twenty-one years. Pray remember me to my favourite Professors, Dr. Christison and Dr. Alison, also to your namesake Dr. James Simson, and Mr. W. Wood, if alive, and continue to believe me to be, my dear Simpson, your sincere friend, James Eyre.

"If you should not like my book, I do not know your frame of mind at all!"

"11 Lower Brook St., *Oct. 4th*, 1852.

"My dear Simpson,—If you yourself did not write that amusing, good-natured, clever critique upon my modest little book in the *Edinburgh Quarterly*, your kind heart led you, I am quite sure, to direct some friendly pen to review the Stomach and its Difficulties for you. I do not regard its being called a gossiping, so long as it is styled a truthful work, or myself as 'elderly' (though a fellow-pupil of yours, to me a boy) so long as the censor describes me as 'amiable.' I should indeed, my friend, have been greatly mortified if I had not had a pat on the back from you, since we were so long students together, industriously imbibing our knowledge at the same fountains, day by day, week by week, and month by month; and, although you have immeasurably outstripped me, still I have won the victory too in my fight in London; and through your praise, and that of an incredible number of others, whose approbation is of great value, I shall, I see, have the care of the bread-baskets of a large number of Her Majesty's subjects. I have been the architect of my own fortune entirely, having had no patrimony; and now in the vale of life, as you will see by the biographical sketch which I send you by this day's post, I hope that my dear wife—the best in the world—and I may be permitted to enjoy some of the comforts of life undisturbed for a few years longer, a zest for which being at present happily continued to us. I have watched your splendid career with great interest and real gratification, and, as is well known, have not been slow to evince how heartily I have rejoiced at your well-earned fame; and you are not greedy either; that is so uncommon a virtue among the rich. Of course a line from one so employed as you are is out of the question, but I should have liked to have known if you recognised my likeness.—Believe me to be, my dear Simpson, your sincere friend,

"James Eyre."

During the summer two gentlemen, with whom he had long

corresponded by letter, and whom he held in the highest esteem, visited Scotland, and took up their abode in 52 Queen Street while in Edinburgh. These were Professor Magnus Retzius of Stockholm, and Professor Channing of Boston, U.S. Dr. Simpson's eighth child and fifth son was born at the time of Professor Retzius's visit, and received his name.

"PARIS, 1852, *Aug.* 27*th*.

"DEAREST FRIEND,—My first and dearest duty after the arrival at Paris is to present you, sir, my sincerest thanks for the innumerable tests of true friendship and cordiality which you, dear sir, showed me during my visit at Edinburgh; for the unmerited and undeserved attention and distinction which you decerned me at so many occasions; for the crowd of interesting and important doctrines, communications, and observations you gave me in such abundant quantity; and finally for the liberality whereby you guested me. Would, Almighty God, that any occasion might present itself to me to show how much I am thankful for your kindness to me, dearest friend! My feelings come in agitation, and my eye becomes tearful whenever I think that I, perhaps, no more in this life will see the man to whom I am so much indebted, and to whom my heart finds itself so strongly stirred.

"I was surprised to be received by Baron Dubois in a most amiable manner, and I found him quite another man than in 1844.

"I beg you to present my compliments to Mistress Simpson and her sister, and moreover to Dr. Drummond, and to every one who keeps me in remembrance. Don't forget to kiss Alexander Magnus on my account.—I remain, dearest Sir, for ever, your sincerest friend and most obedient servant,

"M. RETZIUS."

"LIVERPOOL, *Sept.* 17*th*, 1852.

"DEAR SIR,—I cannot go away without troubling you with a line, though I know how little time you have to spare from a life full of action and full of good. I cannot go without saying

from my heart of hearts fervently, and to ask of God a blessing on you and yours, a thousand thanks for your and their boundless hospitality. Your kindness will never be forgotten; and if in coming time you or yours will give opportunity, I will do all I can do to show how fresh is the memory of my visit to your house. I bear in mind the honoured acquaintance which under your direct influence I was permitted to make. Never can I forget Professors Christison, Syme, Sharpey, men who are among the most distinguished men of our calling, and who so richly deserve the honour they bear. Do remember me most kindly to them. The sin of ingratitude stands very high in the list of delinquencies; and most anxious am I not to have that laid to my charge. How much, and how many do I remember from whom, through you, I have received the most gratifying attentions. How can I fail to remember Ardarroch and its most kind host and hostess, living in the midst and presence of Nature's grandest works; how enlarged is their hospitality, how noble a growth of such a life! . . . I went to Manchester early yesterday morning, to return in the noon convoy. But Mr. Robertson took possession of me, and there I stayed all day and all night. My visit was most pleasant. His family is a most interesting one, and everything was done to make my visit pleasant and useful. Dr. Clay called on me at once, and I made him a long visit. He drove me everywhere, and showed me most interesting objects. I drank tea with him, and had some excellent talk. Thus has your kindness followed me, yes, accompanied me, and made the stranger the companion of friends. . . . I have made all my arrangements for my voyage. I am writing you in the last hours of England—

"Cras iterabimus æquor."

I would invoke all the halcyons of the calendar, if I thought they would come at my bidding. But I must take what comes, and live in my happy past. But however it may be, you will not be forgotten by your most obliged and sincere friend,

"W. Channing."

Dr. Channing's account of his visit was written in Queen Street, and forwarded to his relations in Boston, where it was afterwards published in "A Physician's Vacation; or, a Summer in Europe." The description of Dr. Simpson's work is graphic, and supplies a good comment on much that has been brought under the notice of the reader :—

"At half-past one his consultations at home begin, and last till nearly or quite six. When he began this system of home *clinics*, for such they strictly are, his house was filled at all hours, so that it was impossible to keep any order. People would come at seven A.M., in order to be first. They would get breakfast at six, or earlier, and disturb their own families much. To prevent this, he fixed the hour at half-past one to half-past five. The patients of the two divisions are in different but equally large rooms. They draw lots for priority, have tickets, and come in as called, and so the most perfect order prevails. Everybody knows what are Professor S.'s hours, and everybody observes them. He has an assistant, who writes prescriptions to his dictation, directions, letters, etc., and also attends to cases. He examines cases daily when there is occasion to do so. From long experience, and constant observation—the habit of recording cases—and of distinguishing them with all the accuracy in his power, he is able to arrive at conclusions in the cases before him in a very short time, or to make his diagnosis. I see most, or many of his cases—examine them after him, and I have again and again been struck, in new ones, how true is his diagnosis. He proceeds at once to the treatment. If an operation is to be, he does it at once. Applications of remedies are made, and prescriptions given, with directions, and the patient is desired to call in a week, fortnight, in two days, etc., as circumstances may indicate. At times the case is written down from the answers of patients to questions. This is always the case if it be a new case, or it is probable that changes may be required in treatment, or the effects of treatment noted. Some notion may be got of this portion of

Professor S.'s in-door, or home professional life. He goes through this great labour quietly and methodically, and with as gentle, kind, cheerful spirit as man ever manifested. The moral character of the daily service in disease is quite as striking as is the professional. The moral presides over the whole, and renders it one of the most interesting matters for observation that can occur. I have been utterly surprised at its executive patience, its efficient activity. Here are the poor and the rich together, with no other distinctions than such as will best accommodate both. And I can say, from a long and wide observation, that there is no difference in their treatment. The great fact of each in Professor S.'s regard is the fact that disease exists, which it is the physician's business to investigate and try to remove. He knows what is the prospect of success or of failure, and makes his prognosis accordingly. But, even when the worst is announced, it is not spoken of as utterly hopeless, and something is done, all is done, for present comfort, when nothing may be done for cure. I am surprised again at the varieties of disease which congregate at No. 52, and of the number which is presented in each kind. It is this which gives character to the whole, and makes these *clinics* the very best schools. I have been every day a pupil here. I have every day learned much; yes, a great deal, which will aid me in all my future professional, yes, moral life. I had designed to visit Ireland, but so few days remained to me that I was sure the visit could amount to nothing important, and I concluded to remain at Professor Simpson's house, in the midst of his home practice, and to visit with him abroad such patients as he could show me. Wherever we went the Professor was received with the same bright welcome, the same cheerful face, and I thought this made the beauty of his professional life. One was glad to see him so soon again. Another had been waiting with such patience as could be commanded for a visit. But with all was the appearance and the consciousness that something good was to come from the call. He had time for

everything. He took his seat, and with his 'Come along now,' 'How are you?' 'How have you been?' etc., was always answered to satisfy perfectly the various objects in view. There was directness in his questions, or directions to the patient; but it was so quiet, so easy, that, though time was pressing on new engagements, it seemed that the present one only occupied his mind. There was persuasion with command, or demand, in such proportions, that the patient was only anxious to do the very best for himself, or for herself, and for the doctor. In this way, or by this manner, which seems no manner at all, Professor S. is able to do a great deal in a short time. His coachman understands by a hint where he is to go, and goes rapidly through his various service. As we pass along, some object of interest is at hand—the Botanic Garden, a ruin, a hill, a beautiful prospect. He pulls the string, opens the door which lets down the step, and 'Come away,' tells you there is something for you to see—something to please you, and there is time enough to see it. 'I visit here, and for ten minutes I will leave you; go down there and you will find something.' Off he goes to his patient, and off I go to see what he has indicated. The Professor is well made for despatch. He is short, stout, with small feet, and his step is short and very quick. He is of excellent age for vigour—about thirty-nine, and 'goes ahead' of all walkers. I have almost to run somewhat, not to lose him. Let me finish his picture. You have his length, but not his *full* length. His head is large, covered with a profusion of black hair, which obeys its instincts, and more strikingly so when he thrusts his very small hands into and all over it. His forehead is of good height, but the hair grows low upon it; and to me this is the most becoming manner of its growth, and the antique, the Apollo, the Clyte, etc., support my taste. His face is broad, of fair length, and its expression just such as such mind and heart always produce. His eyes are singularly loquacious, and always begin to talk before he utters a word. His knowledge is more various than

I have before met with. Nothing escapes him. Science and literature are his pleasures. Archæology is a favourite pursuit; and his friends frequently send him books, and specimens, which help his studies. I never saw so many presents. I went up last night late. 'I must make some visits,' said he, 'say at eleven.' Off drove his coach. This morning, before anybody else was up, I went below for my spectacles. On the sideboard was a basket of fine peaches, 'which was not so before.' In the morning bouquets came in. I could fill pages with a list of such offerings as are daily poured in. He has game at every meal. 'Our friends,' said one, 'keep us supplied with game.' His family pass the summer in a very pleasant place a few miles from the city, but his house affairs go on by themselves very much as of themselves, and knew how, and are all in perfect order. Said he to me when he carried me bodily from my hotel, 'I am a bachelor—no woman; but come away, you shall have the best I have.' Night before last he was called into the country. I found him at table in the morning, and with a heavy, but hearty yawn, said he, 'I had a drive last night, over a stony road, in a carriage without springs. I changed it, but was no better off, and I feel well pounded.' This was not a complaint, but an experience, and as soon as breakfast was over, eaten as it was with all sorts of interruptions, he was ready for his visit to the Duchess of ——, and everybody else. He eats little, and as if almost unconscious of the function. In this he constantly reminds me of —— ——. He receives a great deal of money, I have heard. But he seems wholly regardless of money, and, as I have further heard, it is only lately that he had begun to accumulate property. He is paid at the visit or consultation, which saves him from one of the most inconvenient offices, charging and collecting fees. We feel both the inconvenience and loss in America. I have seen fees paid him. It is when the patient is leaving him, and by offering the hand for farewell the fee is deposited in his. I really think if he were subjected to our system, he would get

no money at all. 'At night,' said a patient of his, whom he sent to me when she came to America, 'his pockets are emptied. He knows nothing of their contents before; and so his money is cared for.' I said his meals are often interrupted. His butler brings in cards, notes, letters. 'There,' says he, and lays by note after note. Then two or three ladies come in. If he be not in, down they sit on the sofa, and take up books or newspapers. Then gentlemen, with or without ladies, appear. They are always asked to table by Miss ——, his sister-in-law, or somebody else. When the Professor is at table he places them. But he is reading and eating—or giving bread to a spotted Danish coach-dog named Billy, of fine size, and a universal pet: I feed him always. Professor S. talks to the comers. Then learns of strangers what they want, gets their residence, if visits are wanted, or goes into a room hard by and sees them alone. His house is very large, and full of rooms, and always seems inhabited. At length he gets ready to go out. 'Come away,' says he to me. I run up to put on a different coat, to get hat, etc., and always find him, hat on, at the door, ready to run down the steps for the morning's work. This is the way every day. He wears a narrow-brimmed hat, and puts it on well back, and so shows his whole face and part of his head. His dress is always black, with a remarkably nicely-arranged white neckcloth, with a very carefully-made bow in front. So you see he is always *dressed*. I think, M., you would want to give the hat a different *set*. You could not improve the rest of the toilet. Now, is it not a great privilege to be the inmate of such an establishment as this? Is it not a thing to prize, to be the companion of a man so wholly devoted to others, and yet who is so cheerful, so constantly happy himself? You are admitted by such a man into the society of his thought and of his act. He always talks to the purpose, and yet he is the least of a formalist of any man with whom I have been acquainted. He has large information, for he is habitually an observer and a student; and yet he has

no pedantry, no obtrusion of learning for its (or rather his) own sake, but that his companions may be helped by what he knows. He is almost daily making new observations, discovering something new, or using the known in a new way. And yet he is not in the remotest degree a dogmatist. It is not to support a doctrine that he talks, but to afford you an opportunity to speak more fully of it, to get knowledge from it, or to aid you by the knowledge he communicates. I have been chiefly a questioner in the society of Professor S., and I always have got good answers. If he has no answer, if he cannot explain the unexplained, in my own mind, he turns himself round in his coach, for it is in driving I have the best of his society, and says, 'I don't know; I cannot explain that.' He will add, 'I have had the same difficulty you have, and cannot clear it up.' One advantage has arisen out of this intercourse with Professor S. which declares itself to me every day. I am conscious of a daily review of my own professional life, of thought, of reading, and of study. I speak constantly of books, of cases, of results of treatment. Professor S. has read all, and infinitely more than I have, and yet how small is his study. 'Here is my study,' said he the other night, as I was passing his sleeping-room, on my way to bed, 'come along.' In I went. The room was small. There was his bed, and, in place of a night-stand, there was at the head of the bed a book-stand, or case, with two or three shelves about a foot and a half wide, filled with books. The filling took but few. Taking hold of a moveable gas-burner, he brought it forward, so that he could easily read on his pillow. 'Here,' said he, 'is my study. Here I read at night.' I only said, 'What a privilege it is to be able to read in this way! I never could;' and then, 'Good-night.' I heard his night-bell almost every night."

"At the hardest-worked time of his busy life," says his nephew, Mr. John Simpson, *apropos* of the night-bell, "Dr. S. had not only the burden and heat of the day to bear, but the burden and chill of the night as well. The servant, accustomed to the midnight ring, had a speaking-trumpet, leading from the

side of the front door down to his bedroom, and when the bell was rung he shouted 'Coming directly.' One night he was greatly annoyed on being rung up, to find, when he got to the door, nobody outside. He returned to bed and to slumber, but again the bell rang, and again no one appeared at the door. A third time his sleep was broken, with a like result. Thoroughly roused, and vowing vengeance on the disturber, he took his stand behind the door to await the bell-ringer's next attempt. He had not very long to wait. A footstep is on the street—quickly, softly, on it comes, up the steps, forward to the bell. When the bell moved the door flew open, and out rushed the furious servant to seize in his arms—his master! When told what had happened, he guessed that a patient near by required him. The patient's servant, a country girl, had been thrice sent for the doctor, and been thrice answered, as she believed, by the doctor himself, 'Coming directly.'"

To gratify Dr. Retzius, Dr. Simpson accompanied him to Ireland in the end of August. When Dr. Churchill learned his intention, he at once wrote :—

"137 St. Stephen's Green.

"My dear Simpson,—Come, come, come, by all means, and soon. You shall have a hearty welcome, even if the weather be as bad as to-day. Give my compliments to Mrs. Simpson, and beg that she will sweep you out clean and clear, so that we may have a chance of seeing you. Let me know as soon as you arrive, and I will contrive to be with you as much as possible. Your friend the Swede (whose name you blotted—to enable me to read it, of course) will be welcome also.

"I am sorry I was out when Dr. Milne called, and he took effectual means of preventing my calling on him by leaving no address, or I should have been delighted to have shown him some attention. I have only one word to say—Come.—Yours affectionately, F. Churchill."

His Irish friends were as much gratified with this visit as he was. "I assure you," wrote Dr. Neligan, "that your visit gave both great pleasure and gratification to us all."

CHAPTER XI.

Penalty of Celebrity—Nervous Patients—Lecture at Bathgate—Payment for Results—Oil-Anointing—Lykion Vase—Elected a Foreign Associate of the Academy of Medicine, Paris—Note from Paul Dubois—Chivalrous Defence of Mr. Syme—Vacancy in the Natural History Chair—Candidateship of Edward Forbes—Investigations as to the Cause of Asiatic Cholera—Queries—Amusements—*Tableaux Vivants*—Agassiz—Practice of Physic Chair—Letters—Suretyship for Sandy—Illness—Letters—Physicians in the ancient Roman Army—Gathering Knowledge—Notes from Principal Lee—Monthyon Prize—Archæology—Acupressure—Medical Reform—British Medical Association—Letters—Professor Syme.

If celebrity obtained by persistent and laborious devotion to the interests of man, is sure to rally the wisest and best of his fellow-men around the worker, it seldom fails to cast an equally powerful spell on a very different class—a class of whom it would perhaps be difficult to say definitely whether its members are sane or insane. Nervous, imaginative, dreamy, impulsive, they seek to steady themselves by bringing their schemes or their dreams on behalf of humanity—for they are almost all amateur philanthropists—to those who stand firmly to their own work. Dr. Simpson had to bear this penalty. Impossible plans for the amelioration of society were thrust on his attention. When they reached him by letter they were easily dealt with. His difficulty lay with the gentlemanly or lady-like enthusiasts who came asking for a few minutes' talk on a matter "in which they knew he was greatly interested." In four cases out of six it generally turned out that, if the visi-

tors had a scheme, they had not the faculty of stating it. Their substantial facts thinned away into shadows; their fancies seemed to be the only realities—

> "If substance may be call'd that shadow seem'd,
> For each seem'd either."

An educated man endowed with strong imagination, and much knowledge, but little intelligence, is the most difficult of all to deal with, when he has fairly taken to a hobby.

Our conversation turned on this, on an occasion when I applied to him, in the name of the Bathgate Mechanics' Institute, for a popular lecture. "But what subject could I take that would suit them?" I suggested "Hobbies." He delivered the lecture to a great audience, touched lightly on hobbies, but devoted most of his time to the illustration of the influence of the mind on the body.

In the beginning of 1853 a communication of the sort now referred to reached him from Falkirk:—

"SIR,—I beg leave to transmit the following proposals for your perusal and serious consideration, as they are of paramount importance to the citizens of Edinburgh and its suburbs:—

"I have discovered and invented a plan by which I can protect the lives and preserve the health of the citizens from dangers, diseases, and premature deaths, to which, under existing circumstances, they are compelled to submit; besides, it would realize a saving of more than three millions sterling, which are at present unnecessarily laid out without obtaining the desired end. . . . If the plan were once fully adopted, it would give a stimulus to industry and commerce, quite unprecedented in the annals of our country. . . . It will very shortly stop the different demoralizing streams and torrents of crimes, vices, depravity, immorality, debauchery, drunkenness, prostitution, lying, profane swearing, dishonest bankruptcy, madness, and folly. . . ."

The writer then states at length the blessings which the adoption of the plan would bring to churches, infirmaries,

schools, and colleges. But, unfortunately for the human race, he finishes four closely written quarto pages, without having stated what this wonderful plan is!

Another class of visitors and correspondents much hindered his highest work—a physically healthy but nervous class, whose life-solace is to speak of their imaginary troubles—"A terrible disease," he was wont to say. One case of this kind he described minutely in the lecture at Bathgate. The nature of the delusion, the rank of the sufferer, the low and often tremulous tones of the speaker's voice as he described the case, and the dramatic form into which the narrative was thrown, held a crowded audience in rapt attention and awe. The concluding words—"My friends, let us pray to God to keep us all from such a state as this"—fell with wondrous power on the people. It was "awfu' grewsome," said a woman to me at the close. A few friends supped with him in his brother's house after the lecture, and at table a gentleman of the district said: "I was thanking God all the time she was not my wife." The quiet humour in Dr. Simpson's rejoinder—"But how do you know?" turned the laugh on the grateful husband.

While, however, he had large and hearty sympathy for such cases, he had none for that far from small class who complain of want of appetite while they are faring sumptuously every day. I copy verbatim a gentleman's description of his appetite when applying for something to improve it. The italics are the patient's: "Is there any prescription likely to be of advantage? I am a *very poor eater;* I drink a pint of ale after dinner, and a tumbler of toddy before going to bed." "Drink less," was the remedy prescribed. But illnesses of this kind are seldom curable, except, perhaps, by homœopathic treatment! There are, at least, many proofs of their obduracy and duration. It is not clear whether the case mentioned in the following note was of this description, but the note is worth quoting:—"My dear Doctor,—Mrs. —— wishes to know whether you have received a letter from her. We will settle

our old and open a new account when you come. But I hope you will manage to settle accounts of this sort for ever. If you will get Mrs. —— all right, I shall pay you for each day she is well a certain sum. That's the way some people do in the East. The plan is altogether a good one.—My dear Doctor, sincerely yours, ——."

In April 1853, Mr. Robert Chambers inserted an interesting paper, written by himself, in *Chambers's Journal*, on "Oil Anointing." This was the first public announcement of a subject to which Dr. Simpson had been for several months giving a good deal of time, and to which he had called Mr. Chambers's attention; viz., the prevention and treatment of consumption by the external use of oil. He afterwards contributed a paper to the *Edinburgh Monthly Journal of Medical Science*, in which he made his discovery more fully known, and asked attention to its merits:—"In Great Britain above 70,000 individuals die every year of pulmonary consumption and scrofula. In other words, tubercular or strumous diseases destroy in our island nearly 200 lives every day, or eight individuals every hour. Of the 70,000 deaths, about 60,000 are the result of pulmonary consumption alone; this fatal malady carrying off on an average nearly 170 of our population daily; or extinguishing among us a human life every ten minutes. To arrest this frightful mortality, and to prevent, retard, or cure this—the most destructive variety of human disease—medical science has proposed an almost infinite variety of means. All are ready to lament how comparatively unsuccessful our attempts still are. I trust, therefore, that any new practical suggestion on the matter, tending, in however slight a degree, to abate the violence and mortality of such a fatal form of malady, will be received by my medical brethren with indulgence at least, whether the data which I have to adduce convince them or not of its probable importance and success in this and in some other morbid states.

"A few months ago (December 1852), when on a profes-

sional visit to Galashiels in Roxburghshire, my friend Dr. Macdougall incidentally directed my attention to the healthy state and robust appearance of the operatives at the large woollen manufactories in that town. In the course of conversation he further informed me that these operatives were specially and strikingly exempt from consumption and scrofulous diseases; and that they themselves attributed the immunity which they enjoyed from these affections to the free external application of oil to their bodies, which occurred in various parts of the manufacture of woollen fabrics. This latter observation appeared to me particularly interesting, for, as I remarked to Dr. Macdougall at the time, if oil applied *incidentally* to the skin during working hours, in the common course of factory labour, was capable of preventing or arresting struma and phthisis, the same means ought to be followed by the same effects, with still greater certainty, if the oil were applied *methodically* to the same surface with the regularity of an artificial medicinal agent. The casual observation of Dr. Macdougall appeared to me so interesting in itself, and possibly so important in the consequences to which it might lead, that it seemed a matter of moment to ascertain—*first*, If the same relative immunity from phthisical and strumous disease had been observed among the workers at other woollen factories in Scotland; *secondly*, If this immunity were attributable to the external inunction, when resorted to as a prophylactic or therapeutic means, were capable of acting beneficially upon the body, and could be applied practically in the prevention and treatment of consumption, scrofula, and other affections."

A full outline of the results of his investigations is given under eight heads :—1. Evidence of the comparative immunity of wool-workers from phthisis and scrofula. 2. The cause of this. 3. The quantity of oil used in the mills in the course of the woollen manufacture. 4. By what mode or channels may the oil enter the system of the operatives? 5. Would systematic oil-inunction, as a medicinal measure, prevent or cure tubercular

disease? 6. Diseases and circumstances in which oil-rubbing is indicated. 7. Principal rules for external inunction. 8. Answer to objections to oil-inunction on the score of cleanliness, etc.—oil-anointing of the ancients for luxury, etc. Under each of these heads a great variety of statistical and medical information is given in a popular way. He was anxious to set this subject clearly before the people. He saw very many cases in which they might apply this remedy without incurring expense by calling in a doctor. The affirmative answer to the question under the fifth head is of great importance. I am not aware if oil is prescribed by the profession in the way and for the purposes indicated in this paper. But it is known to be used beneficially by many on their own responsibility.

When looking at the Greek antiquities in the British Museum, in 1852, Dr. Simpson's eye lighted on a small sub-ovoid-shaped, inch-high, and inch-wide leaden vase, marked by a rude Greek inscription—Lukionparamousaiou—*The Lycium of Musæus.* Was this the lycium collyrium, or eye-salve of the ancients? With characteristic promptness he set himself to find an answer to the question. By the kindness of M. Sichel of Paris he was favoured with a drawing of another vase of the same shape and dimensions, made of earthenware instead of lead, and bearing the inscription—"*The Lycium of Heracleus.*" In a work of M. Millin of Paris, published in 1814, he found the description of a third vase of the same size and shape, made of clay, and bearing the inscription—"*The Lycium of Jason.*" His investigations left no doubt that the vases had been used for holding the *Lykion* which the ancients regarded with great favour as a cure for different kinds of ophthalmic inflammation. He was then able to identify it with the *Rusot* or *Ruswut*, at present used extensively by the native medical practitioners of India. Specimens of this were obtained, and successfully employed by Dr. Walker, at the Edinburgh Eye Dispensary.

Dr. Simpson wrote an account of these vases for the *Monthly Journal of Medical Science*, and afterwards published the paper,

"Notes on some Ancient Greek Vases," with figures. The paper was inscribed to M. Sichel. In the introduction he says :—

"The physicians and surgeons who, in ancient time, pursued their medical profession at Rome, and in different parts of the Roman empire, have left us various palpable relics of their craft. Thus, in the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum, numerous surgical instruments, pharmacy, and drug-bottles, etc., have been found; and elaborate drawings and accounts of these have lately been published by Savenko, Vulpes, Renzi, and others. On the sites of the old Roman cities and colonies throughout Western Europe, various surgical and medical relics of the same kind have been at different times discovered: as lancets, probes, cupping-glasses, scalpels, oculist-stamps, phials, etc. But of medicine, as it was still earlier exercised in Greece and in the Grecian colonies, few such tangible vestiges remain. We have, it is true, had carefully transmitted down to us the imperishable professional writings of Hippocrates and others of the purely Greek school; but time has spared few, or indeed almost no, material remnants of the professional instruments or vessels used by the ancient Greek surgeons and physicians.

"Perhaps the great rarity of such archæological remains may serve as some apology for the present notice of some specimens of ancient Greek medical vessels or vases. Besides, the vases which I wish to describe are interesting in other points of view. They are all of them intended to contain one and the same drug, as shown by the inscriptions on their exterior; this drug was derived by the ancient Greeks chiefly from Hindustan,—one of the many points of evidence of the former freedom and frequency of the traffic between the south of Europe and India; and at the present day the same drug is still employed extensively and successfully, by the native practitioners of the East, for the very purposes for which it was, in former times, used by the medical practitioners of Greece.

"The drug to which I allude is the *Indian Lycium* or *Lykion*, the ΛΥΚΙΟΝ ΙΝΔΙΚΟΝ of Dioscorides. In modern collections and

writings, I know of four ancient vases or drug-bottles intended to contain this valued eye-medicine. If our museums, however, were properly searched, perhaps various other Greek vases, for the same or for similar medicines, would be detected."

On the 1st of March Dr. Simpson was elected a Foreign Associate of the Academy of Medicine, Paris—an honour accorded to few, and not, I believe, held at the time by any other member of the profession in Great Britain. The intimation was forwarded by Paul Dubois :—

"PARIS, *le* 4 *Mars* 1853.

"A Monsieur le Docteur Simpson, à Édimbourg.

"MONSIEUR ET TRÈS HONORÉ CONFRÈRE,—Je m'empresse de vous informer que l'Académie Impériale de Médecine, dans sa Séance du 1er Mars courant, vous a conféré le titre *d'Associé Étranger*.

"Je suis heureux d'avoir à vous annoncer, monsieur, une distinction aussi honorable de la part de l'Académie ; les titres que vous pouviez faire valoir avaient naturellement appelé sur vous l'attention de la compagnie, c'est donc une justice qu'elle a rendu à votre mérite et à vos talents.—Veuillez agréer, monsieur, l'hommage de ma considération très-distinguée.

"DUBOIS."

A writer in the *Atlas* newspaper thus describes the circumstances connected with the election to this high honour :—

"The circumstances of the election of Dr. Simpson of Edinburgh as Foreign Associate of the Academy of Medicine has created an emotion in the scientific world almost unparalleled in its annals. The custom from time immemorial has been to appoint, without examination, the members proposed by the commission, and to accept the list thus presented by them with the most perfect indifference. The list offered by the commission on the present occasion consisted of seven names of eminence—Baffalini of Florence, Retzius of Stockholm, Ribero of Turin, Warren of Boston, Valentine Mott of New York,

Wleninch of Brussels, and Graudet of Lisbon—and a supplementary list, consisting of Professors Owen, Faraday, and Bright of London, and Bischoff of Giessen. The absence of a name so eminent as that of Dr. Simpson created the greatest murmur of astonishment and discontent amongst the more enlightened members of the Académie, and several of them, at the head of whom was Dr. Velpeau, rose to exclaim against the awkward *bévue* of which the commission had been guilty. A secret compact was immediately formed, and a formal protest agreed upon, which, duly signed and sealed, was laid upon the President's bureau. But the rules of the Académie being against such demonstration of independence on the part of its members, the protestation, after having been silently perused by M. Bérard, was thrown aside with scorn, and the list proposed by the commission submitted to the inspection of the assembly, as though the appeal had not existed. With the utmost courtesy the majority accepted, without a dissentient voice, the first six nominations; but at the proclamation of the seventh, a tumult arose, and the name of Simpson was shouted forth with unmistakeable energy. The embarrassment of the authorities was great, such rebellion against the decrees of the commission was without a precedent, and for a while there was a show of resistance and a call to order, but this was speedily overcome, and the name of Simpson carried with an enthusiasm which has long been a stranger to the meetings of the Académie. The event has caused an immense sensation amongst the medical profession, as being totally without example; and already are pamphlets of all colours, articles, and appeals, flying about in all directions. One of the presiding members has, indeed, considered it necessary to defend the omission of which himself and colleagues have been guilty, so great is his dread of public opinion on the matter; and the defence has given birth to the most angry controversy on either side. The speeches made on the occasion gave rise to a display of wit which reflects honour on both parties, while the President himself declared that

'although it had hitherto been considered that the greatest honour which the Académie could confer upon a foreign colleague was that of electing him amongst its members, yet it had remained for Dr. Simpson to prove that a greater honour yet existed—that of being chosen in *spite* of the will of the Académie itself.' The incident has had a cheerful influence, inasmuch as it proves that science is at length freeing herself with noble effort from the bonds of prejudice and servitude in which she has so long been held. The election of Dr. Simpson to the French Academy of Medicine has cast a glory around both electors and elected."

Scores of congratulatory notes followed, many of the writers using the occasion to convey to him their own thanks for good received at his hands, or for kind acts. "Amongst the many congratulations," wrote a lady from Paris, "which reach you from all sides upon your nomination to the French Academy of Medicine, I hope you will not despise those of the widow whose heart you have made to sing for joy, by the kindly notice you have taken of her son."

Though apparently engrossed with professional work, he found time for reading in departments with which few would have believed him familiar. "I well remember," says Dr. Turner, "accompanying him, when in Edinburgh on my holiday, some sixteen years ago, to the bedside of an invalid English lady in his house, whose malady did not preclude such resources to beguile the tedium of the sick-chamber as reading and conversation. The staple of her intellectual diet, derived chiefly from the productions of modern authors, was of rather a light description, but it supplied material for a long talk at our visit to her. Burns, Scott, Wordsworth, Longfellow, Gerald Massey, and others of the tuneful throng, were passed in review by doctor and patient—for I was more a listener than an interlocutor—and the lady, although certainly 'well up' at most points, met her match in her host and medical adviser. She spoke a little boastfully of her familiarity with the Doric of our

great national bard, whose acquaintance she had been cultivating under the doctor's auspices. 'Come then, I will try you,' said he; 'turn this verse into English :—

> "Baudrons sits by the ingle-neuk,
> An' wi' her loof her face she 's washin';
> Willie's wife is nae sae trig,
> *She dichts her grunzie wi' a hoschen.*"'

"The fair *examinée* acquitted herself rather creditably in a part of the prescribed exercise, but the unmitigated vernacular of the concluding line proved too much for her. She was, however, made happy in the possession of the autograph of a popular living poet, with which Sir James presented her when we were leaving, and which he cut from a note received that day—an expression of gratitude, as he afterwards informed me, for professional services rendered to a member of the writer's family, for which a fee had been declined."

I have more than once had occasion to notice the want of friendly relations between Dr. Simpson and his colleague Mr. Syme. That Dr. Simpson availed himself of his aid when in illness, might have been thought by some to be no more than selfish regard for his own health. Was it not natural to choose the man believed to be the best operator? But a circumstance soon occurred to show how willing he was to welcome every opportunity of reconciliation, and how ready he was to battle for the right, even when by this he was vindicating an adversary. It showed, moreover, in a most decided and emphatic way, the chivalrous motives which swayed him in his public acts. In 1852 Mr. Syme had performed a new and most difficult operation, the value of which was not seen by some of his professional brethren. At a meeting of the Provincial Medical Association, at Oxford, the annual orator of the Association animadverted in severe terms on the Edinburgh Professor. Dr. Simpson, far from applauding when an adversary was put to the wall, came to the rescue, and compelled the

Association to disown the attack. His letters must have taxed his powers very highly, and taken up much of his time. They would form of themselves a small volume. But he spared neither pains nor time. He saw science insulted in the person of one of its professors, by an official of an Association of which he was the oldest member in Edinburgh, and he regarded it as a duty to take up the case.

DR. SIMPSON TO SIR CHARLES HASTINGS, M.D.

"EDINBURGH, *May* 1853.

"DEAR SIR,—I beg to address you as President of the Council of the Provincial Medical Association; and I do so as being, I believe, the oldest member of the Association in this district.

"Your attention has been already directed to one or two paragraphs published in the last volume of the Transactions of the Association. In these paragraphs your Official Orator for the year, Mr. Hester, has animadverted on the profession in Edinburgh; and in particular, and by name, upon a gentleman who was at the time a member of the Association, viz., Mr. Syme. (See Association Journal for April 22.)

"If you will make due inquiry here, you will find that these animadversions of your Annual Orator on Mr. Syme, are in all their leading points quite untrue in fact. I need not, of course, add, that Mr. H.'s animadversions are also personally and most reprehensibly offensive in style and spirit.

"Mr. Hester, as your Annual Orator, offered these animadversions to the Oxford meeting of the Association. I do sincerely believe he offered them in entire ignorance of the actual facts, as far as Mr. Syme was concerned, because I cannot believe that he or any gentleman would, publicly and gratuitously, utter so much groundless vituperation against another member of the Medical Association, or of the medical profession. Further, I cannot but believe that this Official Oration was allowed by some mere oversight to appear with the repre-

hensible and undignified remarks in question, in your published Transactions. But, at the same time, I do confess, I cannot, with others here, see how, by any possibility, the Council of the Association could, with regard to justice and the dignity of the Association, defend (as they certainly appear to do in the last number of their Journal), the professional abuse uttered by Mr. Hester, and so far 'homologate' it as deliberately to refuse Mr. Syme any expression of regret, that such a very offensive and untrue statement should have been allowed to be published by their Official Orator in the official organ of the Association.

"Before compelling the members of the Association here and elsewhere to carry the matter further, let me, if possible, impress upon the Council that, in its present stage, the whole subject, as yet, could be easily enough rectified and amended. I know I express not my own feelings only, but those of many others, when I state my sincere conviction that Mr. Hester's offensive abuse of Mr. Syme is most unfounded and untrue;—that the publication of it in your Transactions was, to say the very least, most unfortunate;—and that its defence and homologation by the Council will prove most untenable. Therefore, before any ulterior steps are openly taken, let me beg through you to appeal earnestly once more to the gentlemanly feelings of the members of your Council for the quiet and proper settlement of this matter, an object in which it will give me sincere pleasure to assist you in any way within my power.—I have the honour to be, etc., J. Y. Simpson.

"*P.S.*—I will send you a printed statement[1] of what I believe to be the true position of Mr. Syme in this question, viz., one of *persecution*—for having done what? For having introduced one of the greatest improvements in modern surgery."

Six other letters from Dr. Simpson followed; some of them

[1] Viz., the article entitled "Urethrotomy; a Page in the History of Surgery," in *Monthly Journal* for November 1852.

long, elaborate, and closely reasoned. Five of these were addressed to Sir Charles Hastings; the other was written to Dr. Cormack, editor of the Association *Medical Journal*, on the 26th August, giving an outline of the case, calling him to account for what he thought a garbled representation of it at the Swansea meeting of the Association, and claiming a place for the whole correspondence in their Journal. The vindication of Syme, or rather, perhaps, of surgical science represented by him, was complete. The whole transaction is highly suggestive:

> "And therefore let the example serve, though weak,
> For those whom grace has better proof in store."

Professor Jameson, in the autumn of 1853, intimated to Government his intention of retiring from the Chair of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh. Several notes from eminent naturalists were forwarded to Dr. Simpson, intimating their wish to become candidates, "provided Edward Forbes did not wish the Chair," and asking his advice and influence. Forbes, whose paramount claims the ablest of his fellow-workers at once acknowledged was himself as anxious about the matter:—

"28 Jermyn Street, London, *Oct.* 5.

"My dear Simpson,—Since I found on inquiry at the Home Office that Professor Jameson's proposed retirement is likely to prove a *bona fide* proceeding, I am taking prompt measures towards endeavouring to become his successor. After much consideration I am determined to renounce London for Edinburgh, provided I can obtain Professor Jameson's post in its entirety.

"An office of such importance will doubtless attract many candidates, and be much intrigued for—hence, I require all possible support. You are, I believe, intimate with the Duke of Argyll, to whom I have written upon the matter, and who will doubtless be consulted. If you would in any way back my cause with him, and more especially give him to understand

that my presence in the University would be acceptable to the Professors, you would do me much service. Of course I write under the impression that you would prefer seeing me in the post rather than our excellent old friend Dr. Trail, who, from all that I hear, is making vigorous efforts to obtain it.—Believe me, ever very sincerely yours, EDWARD FORBES."

Forbes was appointed without opposition.

The last contribution to the literature of the Syme vindication was no sooner out of his hands than he turned to a very different theme—the probable cause of Asiatic Cholera. He had been much struck by the apparent random character of its choice of localities. For example, it decimated the population of a village near Falkirk, and passed eastward, falling with terrible severity on another village near Kirkliston, where all the conditions necessary to health seemed to have a place. It passed by Linlithgow, where the low marshy ground that borders the loch, the presence of tan-works, and the crowded condition of many of the houses, might have been expected to favour its attack. The same thing was, no doubt, true of other parts of the country, but the facts now referred to came under my own eye. The tenor of the letters written in answer to his queries indicates that this view was before him. He asks if it be known how cholera was introduced? If not, is there anything in the sanitary condition of the place calculated to invite the pest? And, chiefly, what is the state of the water-supply? In cases where cholera fell heavily on the inhabitants of one street, or of one part of a village, while a neighbouring part wholly escaped, he asked, Do the people drink the same water? A good deal of useful information reached him from localities that had suffered, but not, so far as I can discover, anything decisive as to the theory of its connexion with the water-supply.

It is expected of public men that they be given to hospitality.

The reader has seen that Dr. Simpson's entertainment of strangers was cordial, and even lavish. But there was a large social circle of friends, among whom his household moved, to whom he wished to show how warmly he reciprocated the hearty welcome ever accorded to them. All could not be asked to dinner. Then the children were growing up, and, like children, were beginning to show their love for *spectacle*. Strong men, and those who are busily interested in the welfare of their fellows, do not require to have amusements and the means of relaxation provided for them by others. They will seek them in music, in the study of Nature, in the practice of amateur art, in the change of the subjects of study, in the summer excursion, or the winter's walk. But the weak need to be cared for, whether they be young or old. It had become fashionable, moreover, to ask that influential city class "who have more dinners than appetites," to seek relaxation in rational pleasures. Coffee and an evening lecture were to be substituted for late dinners and the unhealthy inanity of the ball-room. Dr. Simpson caught the infection, and helped to spread it. But his method of showing how an evening might be rationally spent took a higher flight. Poetry, costume, impersonation of great names in history and fiction, and representation of historic scenes, were all called upon to teach and to amuse, or, as he would then have put it, "to amuse in order to instruct." But instruction got in this way is never of much value. It is as true of enjoyment in getting knowledge as of the rewards of labour, "that if any would not work, neither should he eat." However, the "Tableaux Vivants" at 52 Queen Street, April 10, 1854, to which many, young and old, learned and unlearned, grave and gay, were invited, were held to be a great success. Poets, sculptors, and painters were daily at Dr. Simpson's table, and were all called upon to contribute to the work. Youthful beauty eagerly lent its charms. Failure was impossible.

The Prologue was by Mr. Alexander Smith, author of "The Drama of Life," etc. :—

"The curtain rises on our mimic scenes.
Pale Flora, watching o'er the Prince, forlorn ;
Ruth, standing like a poppy 'mong the corn ;
And Mary, saddest, fairest of the queens,
Bending in tumbled and dishevelled grief
Above melodious Rizzio, stabbed and torn :
Frail Lucy, shrinking 'neath her lover's scorn,
With faith as worthless as a withered leaf
That o'er the waste by ev'ry wind is whirled.
—Another curtain, o'er a stage of gloom,
Is slowly rising : calm and pale with hate,
Two foes are closing in the tug of doom.
Upon *this* stage shall rise our mimic state,
But on *that* other stands or falls the world."

Then followed the Tableaux :—

"I. The Wizard's Grave in Melrose Abbey. II. Ruth in the Harvest-field. III. The Eve of St. Bartholomew. IV. Flora Macdonald watching Prince Charles. V. The Babes in the Wood. VI. Rebecca and Eleazar at the Well. VII. Hubert and Prince Arthur. VIII. Bride of Lammermoor signing the Marriage Contract. IX. Robbers melting Plate. X. Jeanie Deans presented by the Duke of Argyll to Queen Caroline. XI. Interview of Richard III. with his Nephews. XII. Murder of the two Princes in the Tower. XIII. King Malcolm Canmore and his Saxon Queen. XIV. Gulnare and Conrad. XV. Murder of David Rizzio in Holyrood."

The Epilogue was written by Sydney Yendys (Mr. Dobell), author of "The Roman," "Balder," etc. :—

"Our shows are ended. All the pictures rare
That filled the bright eyes of this brilliant crowd,
Dissolved, like those strange landscapes of the air
Which sunset paints upon a coloured cloud.
Yet, gentle friends, I would not have you deem
You saw but fabrics of a faithless dream.
In changing form, but in unchanging youth,
Truth is eternal. And we showed you *Truth !*

. . . . . .

But not alone our pictures have displayed
The stuff whereof each changing Age is made ;
We point the moral of the Moment ! Ay !
We paint the portrait of the year and day !
Fancy transports you to another clime,
And thinks she sees a mirror of the time ;

From sky to sky our rising curtain furled,
Our Actors Nations, and our Stage the World."[1]

. . . . . .

To the regret of all his colleagues, and of scientific workers everywhere, Edward Forbes died in 1854, after a very brief occupancy of the Chair he had so eagerly desired, and around which his geniality, varied literary accomplishments, and unrivalled gifts as a naturalist, seemed destined to shed great lustre. Who was to take his place? On the retirement of Professor Jameson, Dr. Simpson, and indeed all men interested in Scottish natural science, looked first to Forbes. Failing whom, Dr. Carpenter seemed the most likely, while others thought it would be a graceful act to offer it to the New College Professor of Natural Science, Dr. John Fleming, a veteran who had done great and good work both in the departments of Zoology and Geology. But his age led his friends to think it inexpedient to move in his favour. Dr. Carpenter had chosen London as the sphere of his life's-work. Communications from scientific men requesting the promise of his influence on their behalf, again led Dr. Simpson to take an interest in filling up this Chair. He and other men of influence, having now turned to Agassiz, he communicated their views to the Duke of Argyll. The Duke replied :—

"Downing Street, *Nov.* 26, 1854.

"My dear Sir,—I heard of Edward Forbes's death with dismay. It is an irreparable loss to science.

"I think there can be no doubt that if we could secure *adequate emolument* for both branches of a divided Chair, the division would insure the best and most adequate teaching. Agassiz is a great name. But I doubt whether, with all his fame, he was equal to Forbes: nor do I think he is a great Palæontologist, except in

[1] The fifth of the tableaux was greeted with roars of laughter and rounds of applause. Dr. Simpson and his colleague, Dr. L. P., were "The Babes." They entered sucking oranges, and dressed as children—short dresses, pinafores, frilled drawers, white socks, and children's house shoes. After wandering about a while, they began to weep, then lay down and died, to the great delight of the juveniles!

the *Fish* department. But of this I am not sure. . . . Yours truly, ARGYLL."

It soon appeared that the appointment of Agassiz would not be popular, and that the Government was not likely, in such circumstances, to act in his favour. None could doubt his pre-eminent claims as a naturalist, but he had committed himself to certain, so-called, advanced views on the natural history of Man, which many believed would influence the whole teaching from the Chair. The weight of his great name had been freely given to Messrs. Gliddon and Nott in their work on "Indigenous Races of Mankind"—a work in which views as little in harmony with true science as with religion were freely and openly advocated. As in the churches of America theologians were found arguing against the negro right to a place in the great Christian brotherhood, and pleading for the lawfulness and continuance of slavery on the score of Scripture warrant, so among scientific workers not a few were making earnest efforts to convince the people that the African type of mankind is specifically different from that of the Saxon or the Celt. They were, in a word, pleading for the recognition of a plurality of human species, as the original progenitors of the various families of mankind. It should be remembered, however, that Agassiz never took up this extreme ground. He held that the species is one, but that a plurality of human pairs were created at the beginning in various geographical centres. But Dr. Simpson believed that Agassiz was not the least likely to allow theoretical views, even on this vital subject, to give tone and character to his public teaching.

In 1855, a Professor had to be appointed to the Practice of Physic Chair, and Dr. Simpson again found himself in the heart and heat of controversy. When we remember how bitterly he felt and how earnestly he resented the interference of some of his colleagues in his own election, we may wonder that he ever ventured to take any step in these matters, fitted to create

even the slightest suspicion of interference on his part. But if we are to form a fair judgment of his actions in this case, and in other cases, as, for example, in filling up the Chemistry Chair in 1858, we must first look at the position he held in the estimate of the foremost men of the day. Not only did candidates themselves urge their claims on his notice, but their most distinguished friends did the same in their behalf. Patrons and men high in place sought his advice, in a way which showed clearly that they at least believed him incapable of being influenced by any motives, except for the good of the University. He might, indeed, have refused to speak a word in favour of any man, or to give an advice to any applicant, but this would have been both unkind and uncourteous. Even, however, had he gone beyond his province and his duty on such occasions, the nature of the charges brought against him, the mode in which they were stated, and the spirit that animated those who made them, were altogether unjustifiable. Of course, he could defend himself, and he did it. But the defence itself is apt, in such cases, to take a direction unfavourable, if not to science, at least to that high estimate of scientific men, which for the sake of science and humanity both, it is important to maintain and cherish among the people. Sure of his ground, he appealed from the opinions and prejudices of partisans to the judgment of the public, being persuaded they would look at the merits. His patients took as lively interest in these election proceedings as if he had been the candidate.

TO MRS. TOOTAL.

"The more I see of Mr. Pender, the more do I like him. . . .

"I am lamenting this week that I did not take a pure holiday for a week or two at Paris or elsewhere, as I have again had a bad headache, and two days' fever this week. But it can't be helped now. At all events, I had enough of travelling during the autumn, as I was railwaying hither or thither five days out of most 'sevens.'

"In your letter the other day you allude to Dr. Laycock's election, and to what was said of it. I have been often very amused (and in one instance *very* vexed) by the reports circulated by my professional brethren and others, in regard to it, and have been obliged to disclaim alike the merit or demerit of it; as if my influence, or the influence of any one man, could determine the choice of our thirty-three worthy Town Councillors! If my advertising Dr. Laycock of the vacancy was the cause of his success, then I fear the *want* of success of Dr. Bennett, Dr. Jenner, etc., was owing to the same cause, as I advertised them also of it, not knowing who would stand. The first hint I got of the certainty of Dr. Alison retiring (a note from one of the Town Council) I forwarded to Dr. Christison in the country, as some thought that he wished it,—others said no. If you will ask Dr. Noble of Manchester, you will find, I believe, that it was he and another physician (I forget who) that were living at the time with Dr. Laycock at the York Association meeting, who advised and urged him to become a candidate. When he did come down, the first thing I told him was, that, with some of the other Professors, I wished particularly Dr. Bennett to get the vacant Chair, in order that we might get Dr. Sharpey down by this arrangement to our University. Mr. Syme and I, in speaking of it, found ourselves, before this, of the 'same mind;' but of course would not, and could not, have interfered if Dr. Christison (whose sentiments we did not know) became a candidate, as neither of us would have opposed his wishes. I am sure of one thing, that when, towards the end, I did begin to interest myself in the matter at all, I worked harder for Dr. Bennett than I would do again for any living man; and the day before the election, in order to gain one Councillor's second vote for him, I submitted to be abused by that Councillor in a way that I would NOT have borne if I had been asking the favour for myself. By midnight that Councillor sent me word that he would give his second vote for Dr. Wood. One of the Bailies came to town

to propose Dr. W., which Bailie, it was thought, would stop away; and it was *then* as certain as that there are twenty-four hours in the day, that Dr. Bennett's chances, feeble as they were two hours before, were utterly and entirely gone. Dr. Wood had eighteen against Dr. Bennett's fifteen votes. At the same time I knew, and EVERY common-sense man who was attending to the matter knew, that Dr. Laycock had a majority of either two or three against Dr. Wood, if these two were 'pitted.' Dr. Wood knew this long before, and *his* great fear was Dr. Bennett withdrawing."

This matter was again revived in 1858, and Dr. Simpson in self-defence gave a full statement of the case in the *Scotsman*, November 13.

TO THE SAME.

"Mrs. S. and all the others well. My youngest little boy, Retzius, is, I think, exactly what I was when young, in face and person, and passion too.

"Drs. Priestley and Storer, my two assistants at present, are bringing out an edition of all the sense and nonsense I have ever written on Midwifery. It is their own idea; and Messrs. Black are to pay all expense, and give them £100 for every 1000 copies sold. I sometimes am allowed to see a proof sheet. It is to be a work, it appears, of 1200 or 1400 octavo pages. They have printed last month 500 pages."

Again :—

"CREWE, *Saturday morning, six o'clock.*

"Here am I a prisoner at Crewe for an hour or two, on my way onward for a professional visit to Stafford. It has been a dreary, cold night's travel up; but I hope to enjoy the rush back to Edinburgh in the afternoon.

"I hope you and Mr. Tootal are enjoying yourselves in the Isle of Man. It is, I think, a very nice place. Mrs. S., Jessie, and I had indeed a very, very happy week in Ireland. We were well over it—from the Giant's Causeway to Cork, and

from Athlone to Dublin. Of course we admired from our hearts the Lakes of Killarney, the Gap of Dunloe, etc.; but my antiquarian propensities made me revel also in our visits to the round towers and old churches of Glendalough, Cashel, Kildare, Killaloe, etc. I fear I must write a paper on the remains of Irish ecclesiastical architecture in Scotland. There is much of it unknown to almost any one, and most intensely interesting. We visited the old towns and cities of Limerick, Cork, Mallow, Athlone, etc., and were overwhelmed with kindness in Dublin. Our only accident was dropping Mrs. S. and Jessie out of an Irish car in the Phœnix Park,—fortunately not much hurt. Jessie and I did become such tremendous cronies on the road. She was all activity, was one day up at half-past five, and not in bed till after eleven—pretty well for a young lady of eight years. She rode her horse for six miles at the head of the Killarney lakes, and was rejoiced at 'beating' both her mother and me. There was only one drawback. My friends Dr. Stokes, and Dr. Petrie, the great Irish antiquary, were away from Dublin; but they came to me in Edinburgh on Wednesday last, and we spent a MOST delightful day together."

The reader has had many illustrations of the peculiarly strong and tender tie between Dr. Simpson and his brother Alexander. The watchful care and timely help which the elder brother had so often shown when they were specially needed, were not forgotten when Dr. Simpson attained the exalted position he now held. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth." Both brothers experienced the force of the maxim. Alexander's prosperity grew with his brother's. He was about to become the manager of a branch bank in Bathgate, and surety being required, he applied to James.

"*1st February* /56.

"MY DEAR SANDY,—I have only one moment left to say how happy I am at the receipt of your letter.

"Believe me, I shall be only too proud to be caution for you to any extent that I am worth.—Yours always,

"J. Y. Simpson."

Dr Simpson had entered on the professorial work of session 1855-56 in feebler health than usual. The demands on his time were still increasing, and his love for work kept pace with them. But he was more easily fatigued than formerly. The attacks of rheumatism, headache, and pain in the side, recurred with a frequency that made his friends uneasy.

"Stockholm, *the 12th June* 1856.

"Dearest Friend,—Yesterday I had the pleasure to receive your amiable letter of the 20th May, but not from the hands of Dr. Handyside, whose personal acquaintance I should be very happy to make. I beg you to be persuaded that if he comes to Stockholm, I shall do my possible to serve him in everything. But as your letter and the book-parcel was sent me directly by Dr. Hannover of Copenhagen, I suspect that Dr. Handyside went immediately from Copenhagen to St. Petersburgh by a steam packet. Perhaps he will pay a visit at Stockholm when returning from St. Petersburgh.

"I am much obliged for your kind message. I shall distribute the books according to your wishes. How is it possible for a man with such a quantity of professional business to spare so much time at the desk? You are in every point an extraordinary man!

"Your demand in account of the tumuli and tombs of Upsala I will try to fulfil. But I may previously observe that a complete and official account of the enterprise is still at this moment not published, although twelve years are passed since the digging was undertaken. We have merely a short report thereon printed in the *Upsalin Adviser* from the hand of the antiquarian who conducted the search. I will make a translation and send it by the post, so that you may have it before the middle of July.

"I am most sorry to hear that your health has been troubled during the last winter. Take care of yourself, dearest friend, for the sake of science and mankind.

"With ardent wishes for your health, happiness, and prolonged life, I am, dearest friend, ever yours most sincerely,

"M. C. Retzius."

At the close of the session he paid a short and pleasant visit to Paris.

Dr. Simpson's ninth child, Evelyn Blantyre (Eve), was born in June 1856.

TO A FORMER PATIENT.

"*Friday*, 16*th June* 1856.

"A report has been current here for the last thirty hours that there is a new baby upstairs. Walter thinks I must have brought it from France, and is terrified it will only speak French. Jessie says it is a 'good boy,' and she will nurse it. Mrs. S. is quite well, and was, of course, sound asleep when this little stranger arrived at Wardie.—Yours very faithfully,

"J. Y. Simpson."

TO THE SAME.

"I wish I had any chance of accepting your very, very kind invitation, but, alas! I have none. At present I am fearfully busy, and will be so for some time to come, unless I break down. Yesterday I worked in the house from one to half-past seven with patients; and to-day when I left at four for the College examination here, all the 'corners' were full.

"To-morrow I am determined, if possible, on a half-holiday to Inchcolme, as I have an invitation from Rossend Castle for the purpose, and the offer of a little yacht for any party I will take over.

"Dr. Christison is busy examining a few yards off, and is looking much better within the last few days. I had two or three happy days at Abbotsford, where little 'Walter Michael Scott' was born a fortnight ago. He is Sir Walter's *first*

great-grandson. He is called Michael, after the wizard 'Michael Scott,' being himself as yet a very, very wee wizard.

"Mr. Syme goes up to Manchester on Tuesday for some days.

"Do you know I am sitting to Sir John Watson Gordon for my portrait, a present to my wife from one of my patients? I have only got one day this week, and will have a 'scold' from him on Monday.

"My kindest regards to Mr. T.—Yours very truly,

"J. Y. Simpson.

"*P.S.*—I have got a fee of 300 guineas from one patient this week. Good, as there was not much to do. J. Y. S."

TO HIS BROTHER.

"My dear Sandy,—I am sure you will be delighted to hear that yesterday, on the Professors reporting on the written exercises of the candidates for graduation, out of 43 there were four selected as specially good, and Alex. was one of the four. His exercises were among the best, if not, on the whole, the *very* best, of the lot.—Yours always, J. Y. Simpson.

"*Thursday.*"

TO MRS. TOOTAL.

"Mrs. Simpson, Walter, and Jessie have been spending the last three weeks at Torriesdale Castle in Argyleshire, but I expect them home soon. I write this at Viewbank, which is very pretty this afternoon, but where I have not been for a week or more. This year I have not yet had one single holiday, and scarcely expect one now. But I have had many long runs during the last few months. I have been often up in England professionally during the summer; once as far as Brighton, seeing a consumption case; once at Scarborough, where my wife went with me, and we saw the 'Laycock baby' as we passed home; once or twice in London, where I saw the Queen; once at Ambleside, accompanied by Jessie and by Aggie Petrie, etc.

I long and weary, however, for a *real* jaunt, without a sick patient lying at the end of it; and I had a great fancy on Thursday to run from Manchester to Douglas, and send all the patients far enough. I have been too hard worked to write, but I *must* write one or two papers now, which I will duly dedicate to you.

"Queen Street has been a little hotel during the summer —always some sick lady or another sleeping in it, and sometimes several, at night. I wish I had one free day at Castle Mona, with so many things to talk of.

"Give my kindest regards to Mr. Tootal. When I specially asked if *he* were in town, the maid answered by declaring 'she' is gone to Castle Mona.—Yours always,

"Edinburgh, *Sunday.* "J. Y. Simpson."

When he began to think of relaxation, he was called to pledge himself to more work :—

"12 Old Burlington Street, *August 11th.*

"Dear Dr. Simpson,—I have returned to England, and recommence editing the *Medical Times* on the 1st of October next, and I am most anxious to have an attractive course of lectures for the new volume commencing with the new year. Now, if you would allow me to employ a shorthand writer to take down your course of lectures as you deliver them in the University next session, and would correct the proofs, I am quite sure we should completely throw Tyler Smith and the *Lancet* into the shade. I have seen Priestley, and he seemed to think you might be disposed to accede to our wishes. We would get as many woodcuts engraved from your diagrams, photographs, or drawings as would be necessary to illustrate the lectures; indeed, we should be glad to be rather profuse in the way of illustration.—Yours most truly,

"T. Spencer Wells."

After graduating, Dr. Alexander Simpson went to study at Halle. There a communication from his uncle reached him,

conveying the information that he had engaged him to accompany a young gentleman to Egypt, with the view of spending the winter. The letter is dated October 1856. It supplies a good illustration of the rapid way in which he was wont to grasp a subject, and to take in all its bearings. He was most anxious that his nephew should at once begin to seek distinction; but circumstances occurred that made it inconvenient to carry out the proposed arrangement.

"You can study German, etc., on your route at leisure, and above all you can gather materials on the voyage for a proper description of Egypt as a station for invalids—a description which is at present a sad blank in medical literature. In fact, if you will write a *good* paper on the Nile as an invalid station, it is as sure a step to literary and medical fame as at this moment you could possibly take; and I know and feel you will do it well, and no one will be prouder of your achievement than I will. For this purpose you must turn your attention to meteorology and meteorological instruments a little. I will send you out one or two good English books of instruction. You will need to have barometers, registrar and common thermometers (Fahrenheit's will be got at Malta, I believe; all the French are Réaumur scale), and one or two hygrometers. I believe meteorologists trust to a simple plan of wet cloths on the bulb of the thermometer for hygrometric observations. You will require to collect, among other points, (1) the average daily temperature, and its extreme limits daily; (2) the hygrometric and barometric states daily; (3) occasionally the temperature of the Nile; (4) the temperature of the earth at a foot or two deep now and then; (5) the heat of any cold or hot springs near; (6) the general character of the geology; (7) the general character of the botany, etc. etc. Besides, you will have to study the effects of the climate on phthisis, etc., in their different stages. It is, perhaps, the best climate for invalids in the first stage of phthisis. Is it of equal or any service when the tubercles begin to disintegrate? I will send you Sir J. Clark's

book on Climate, and two excellent late papers by Dr. Mitchell on the climate of Algiers, as models. Ask after any German or French medical works on Climate, and take them with you. Get Louis or some other good book on Consumption, and Virchow's Practice of Medicine in German, or Valleix in French. I will try and get some good general work on Egypt and Egyptian hieroglyphics for your amusement. I will pack up also Dr. Cumming's book on Egypt. (He was one of the first invalids sent to the Nile.) Would such a diary as his book is now take well as a book? Try your hand in keeping a diary; but what we doctors want is a full and perfect *medical* account of the climate. Pliny long ago (seventeen centuries back) recommended it as the best climate for phthisical patients. All late observations go to prove that it is even yet *the* best."

Dr. Simpson's archæological investigations were taking a wider range than heretofore. His tastes had hitherto found gratification in using the literature of days long gone by, to illustrate modern departments of professional study, and to shed light on new methods of treatment, or on remedies first proposed by himself. When ancient monuments occupied his pen, his professional pursuits were still the leading theme, as appears from the papers on "Ancient Roman Medical stamps," and on the "Greek Jars for Lykion." But he was now working at observations on Picts' Houses, Round Towers, Sculptured Stones, Burial Urns, Lake Dwellings, Primeval Pottery, and Palæolithic Weapons. In his visits to various parts of the country he took great pains to discover traces of ancient edifices, and to ascertain the spots where monumental stones had stood or were still standing. Visitors from the Hebrides, from Orkney, or from Shetland, were questioned regarding prehistoric monuments, as thoroughly as if he had done nothing all his life but search into what was known, or propose queries on what was as yet unknown. Wherever he wandered he gleaned "Traditions of the Scottish Saints," with an eagerness and diligence that suggested to some of his friends he was

gathering materials for a work on the subject. In the course of his inquiries, he comes again on points touching ancient physic and physicians among the traces of the Roman army in Britain, which fall so readily into the track of old investigations that he turns aside at once to pursue it once more. His next paper—"Was the Roman Army provided with Medical Officers?"—was published in July 1856, and inscribed to Professor Pillans, "as a small tribute of sincere esteem from an old and attached pupil." This mark of respect was highly appreciated by the aged Professor :—

"My dear Dr. Simpson,—I send herewith a copy of an *omnium gatherum* of my petty performances lately published, begging your acceptance of it in acknowledgment of the very high and highly prized honour you have done me, by inscribing to me your learned, ingenious, and most interesting Memoir. To have my name *so* coupled with one of such world-wide celebrity as yours, is not, I assure you, the least gratifying result of my humble labours.—I ever am, my dear Sir, faithfully and gratefully yours, James Pillans.

"43 Inverleith Row, Edinburgh, 3 *Aug.* 1856.

"*P.S.*—You were kind enough to promise me a few copies of your Memoir, which I should be glad to receive by the bearer, as I have an opportunity of sending one or two to friends in Paris in the course of this week."

In a prefatory note he says :—"A few years ago, my late colleague, Sir George Ballingall, asked me, 'Was the Roman Army provided with Medical Officers?' He was interested in the subject as Professor of Military Surgery, and told me that he had made, quite unsuccessfully, inquiries on the matter in various quarters and at various persons. I drew up for him a few remarks, which were privately printed and circulated among his class at the time. The present Essay consists of an extension of these remarks."[1]

[1] See *Archæological Essays*. By Sir J. Y. Simpson. Edited by John Stuart, LL.D. Edinburgh : Edmonston and Douglas. 1872.

It is curious and highly suggestive to notice how willing men were to work and observe for his sake. It shows, too, how wide-spread and genial his influence was. The man of letters hastened to tell him of discoveries made in volumes bearing the dust of ages. The farmer prized the discovery of a stone cist or a sculptured stone on his lands, because he believed "it would gratify the Professor." The country doctor not unfrequently appeared at Queen Street with a stone celt, or a bronze spear, or a coin that nobody could make out, or a paper "rubbing" of an old inscription, or an ancient "brass," all showing how carefully he had looked to what was literally "turning up" in his district, in the hope that he too might "give pleasure to Simpson." And he had something to say on all the objects, with the exception, perhaps, of the coin, which was generally put aside with the remark: "Mr. Sime (the antiquary) will read that for us."

"College, *Augt.* 29, 1856.

"My dear Sir,—Among my old medical tracts I have recently observed two or three which I herewith send as being on subjects not of every-day occurrence, though they may have fallen within the range of your large professional experience. I am not sure that I have any more of the same peculiar character, but such as they are I transfer them to you to preserve or to destroy as you think fit. I do not name their names, for they are not attractive. They are of the dates 1733, 1742, and 1770.—I am, my dear Doctor, yours faithfully, John Lee."

"College, *Sept.* 2, 1856.

"My dear Sir,—I find that the stuff which I sent you last week from my son David (as dark as Milton's 'pitchy cloud of locusts') is petroleum. I do not know why he should intrude on your notice that fulsome stuff any more than he should send coals to Newcastle; but he has probably explained the matter to you. Equally absurd is it for me to send you any loathsome monstrosities; but for once admit the effigies of a hideous fœtus which ventured to exhibit its offensive presence

to the physicians and naturalists of Salzburg ninety-nine years ago.—Yours in haste, JOHN LEE."

In the midst of his literary, scientific, and professional work, he finds time to look into proposals for more thorough Sabbath-school instruction in the poorer districts of the city; to make inquiries touching certain customs practised by the heathen on the west coast of Africa; to master the views of Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Alison relative to the support of the poor; and even to make himself acquainted with the merits of Mr. H. Dempster's Trawling Apparatus! Nor was the scheme in which Professor Wyville Thomson had joined him—"Simpson and Thomson's Patent Oil"—forgotten. It got a little of his time and a good deal of his money.

The award by the French Academy of Sciences of the Monthyon Prize of 2000 fr., for "most important benefits done to humanity," crowned the work and honours of this year. The prize, consisting of a handsome gold medal and a sum of money, was forwarded to him by Sir Joseph Oliffe, physician to the English embassy, accompanied by a letter of hearty congratulation.

The cordiality with which men co-operated with Dr. Simpson in his archæological inquiries has just been noticed. The most accomplished of his brother antiquaries were equally zealous and active. Generally their communications indicate the work he had on hand at the time. Indeed, they were for the most part drawn out by his own inquiries, or by the information which he ever willingly shared with fellow-workers. Here are some specimens:—

"SIGNET LIBRARY, *Friday.*

"DEAR DOCTOR,—I send you the old medical MS. A part of it, I see, professes to be taken from *The Regiment of Health*, probably the work of Thomas Phaer or Phaire, frequently printed in England about the middle of the sixteenth century. The MS. contains some curious prescriptions. One that may not escape your notice is: 'To gar ane man sleip till he be schorne.'" . . . Yours truly, D. LAING."

"*Friday evening, 9th Oct.* 1857.

"My dear Professor Simpson,—I find that my memory has betrayed me as to the whereabouts of the churchyard with holy earth brought from Rome. It was not, I see, at Lecropt, but in the adjoining parish of Kincardine. I had been misled by a mis-recollection of the service of John Earl of Mar in 1635, as heir of his father in 'terras ecclesiasticas de Lecrope —terras ecclesiasticas de Kincardyne, cum crofta Sancti Lolani.' (*Inquisit. Spec. vicecom., Stirling,* No. 156). I had forgotten somehow the mention of Kincardine, and so fixed the croft of St. Lolan at Lecropt.

"The Breviary of Aberdeen, which preserves the legend of St. Lolan, does not name his church. It tells that he was the nephew of St. Serf, and like him (and Mr. Disraeli) of Canaanitish extraction; that for seven years he was door-keeper of St. Peter's at Rome; that longing to see his uncle he fled one morning leaving the key in the church-door; that there it remained immoveable, an angel declaring that it could be turned only by the same hand which had put it there; that thereupon a deacon and sub-deacon, devout men, were sent in search of St. Lolan; that they found that fugitive porter at Plane in Scotland; that, hearing the angelic revelation with which they were charged, he chopped off his right hand, which being carried to Rome at once opened the long-locked gates of St. Peter's; that, in return for his lost hand, St. Lolan asked four sacks of earth from the cemetery of St. Peter's; that his request was complied with, and four colts were laden with the holy burden and despatched to Scotland, where St. Lolan besought of the Lord that whoever should be buried in the cemetery to be consecrated by this holy earth and his own burial, should enjoy the same indulgences which he would have enjoyed if he had been laid to rest in the cemetery of St. Peter's at Rome (*Brev. Aberd. Prop. SS. pro temp. estiv.*, foll. cxiii. cxiv.)

"That the churchyard which was sanctified by St. Lolan's bones, and the earth from St. Peter's, was Kincardine in Monteith is shown by the notice of St. Lolan's croft above cited,

and by the express intimation of the Martyrology of Aberdeen (in your University Library), that he was venerated at *Kincardyne prope Stirling.* Plane obviously is Plean, on the opposite bank of Forth.

"Like many more of our Scotch, Irish, and Northumbrian saints, St. Lolan had a holy bell. The *sacra campana Sancti Lolani* figures among the feudal investitures of the Earls of Perth so late as the graceless reign of King Charles II. (*Inquisit. Spec. vicecom. Perth,* nn. 708, 880, 1094). May not this relic still slumber among the lumber at Drummond Castle? A few years ago I found a bell of the same primitive class lying unheeded at Cawdor Castle. You may remember it at our Archæological Institute meeting here the summer before last. These square iron bells are turning up every day. Mr. Albert Way bought one lately for the Duke of Northumberland. It came from Inismurry in Sligo, along with an ancient crosier or *bachnil.* Both bore the name of St. Molaissi, and Way, who went straight from Lamlash to Alnwick, was in hopes he had found the relics of his Arran friend. I find, however, that the St. Molaissi of Inismurry is a different man from St. Molaissi of Lamlash.

"The Earls of Perth had another holy bell—that of St. Kessog of Luss on Loch Lomond. Like St. Lolan's bell, it was included among their feudal possessions, being like that a source of profit from the dues paid by those who resorted to its miraculous powers, whether for the recovery of stolen goods or the cure of sick cattle.

"Another *crannoge* emerges in Bute. I have now nearly a dozen, which will be enough to tame the conceit of our Irish neighbours, that they and the Swiss have a monopoly of that kind of antiquity. *Alba go bragh!*—Ever faithfully yours,

"JOSEPH ROBERTSON."

"*Friday evening, 9th Oct.* 1857.

"MY DEAR PROFESSOR SIMPSON,—My memory is naught. It not only confounded Leeropt with Kineardine, but forgot that Leeropt had a saint of its own. . . .

"His feast was on the 9th of November. Try if there be no trace of him yet recoverable—a well or a fair.—Yours very truly, JOSEPH ROBERTSON."

"EDINBURGH, 28 ALBANY ST., *28th August* 1857.

"MY DEAR DOCTOR,—I send you my 'Trojan Notes,' but must warn you that they are not written either for publication or for communication to a learned Society. They were meant originally to preserve my own recollections of the Troad, and to satisfy the inquiries of friends.

"I hope you may have patience to read them. If you would take the trouble to mark objections or queries against passages which require explanation, I shall be much obliged, and ready to supply what is wanting. And if you believe that there is anything worth communicating to the antiquaries (I think the whole style of narrative is unsuited for the Royal Society) I will gladly revise, abridge, or expand the notes. . . . —Yours very truly, WILLIAM ROBERTSON."

"MORELAND, GRANGE LOAN.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Accept my thanks for the perusal of Dr. Robertson's MS., which I have read with much interest. Having had the maps of Pratt and Forschammer before me, I found the paper perspicuous and instructive, for he visited many localities which I did not see when I travelled hastily over the Troad in 1847. His conclusions as to the essential points of the Homeric topography agree with mine; and I am gratified by the favourable opinion he has expressed of my book, in terms indeed too flattering. It was written, as he truly observes, under the disadvantage of having no good map in my hands.

"I have long been preparing for a second edition, and hope to begin it by and bye. I presume he means to publish his MS. It will be considered, I imagine, too long for a magazine, and as a separate work it would probably have but a limited sale. It should have a more attractive title—one setting forth that it is a book of travels, not of mere speculation or discussion. I would suggest, 'Excursion on the Troad, with Observations on its Topography and Antiquities.' A reduced copy of Spratt's

map would add much to its value. The sketch at page 20 is much too meagre.

"The unsteadiness of my hand since my rheumatic fever in 1856 compels me to write with a pencil instead of a pen, which I hope you will excuse.—I am, my dear Sir, very truly yours,

"CHA. MACLAREN."

"MY DEAR DOCTOR,—There is not a single shred in existence in the neighbourhood of Derry of the old chapel of St. Columb. . . .

"There is a place near Derry called St. Columbs, and in the grounds there are the ruins of an old chapel, noted in Captain Neville's map of the Siege of Derry as 'St. Columbkill's Chapel in ruins.' This is clearly a mistake. The ruins consist of two very modern-shaped gables, covered with ivy, nothing about their masonry to indicate an old date. I only found out yesterday what this chapel really was. . . .

"I went over the whole place quite carefully, and there is certainly not a single trace of a ruin about it. There is however a well still venerated as St. Columb's well, and a stone with two round pits in it, which were worn by the knees of the saint. . . .—Yours ever, WY. THOMSON."

Dr. John Alexander Smith, when on a professional visit at Armadale Castle, Skye, writes :—

"MY DEAR SIR,—. . . Lord Macdonald has in his drawing-room a case containing several antiquities found in Skye; these consist of a bronze leaf-shaped sword, and two bronze spear-heads, not of a very large size, which were found contained in a thick box of oak, just about the length of the sword. . . . There is also a very curious spur of bronze, terminating behind in a sharpened point. It is of a small size, not going over the heel of an ordinary boot or shoe, is rudely engraved over the surface, and at various distances along its upper surface there are sockets cut out in it containing what appears to be pieces of precious stones of rounded shapes. . . .—I remain yours very truly, JOHN ALEXR. SMITH."

"Temple Place, Strood, Kent, *Nov.* 12*th*, 1857.

"My dear Sir,—I have had much pleasure in naming you Dr. Wilson (for the Toronto University) and the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, to my friend M. Bouchè de Perthes of Abbeville for copies of his 'Antiquités Celtiques,' etc., now about to be sent to Somerset House, London, to the care of Mr. Akerman. I presume the Society Ant. Scot. is still alive, though I have not seen any notice of it for years. . . .—Yours very truly, C. Roach Smith."

"20 Inverleith Row, 3*d April* 1858.

"My dear Dr. Simpson,—I have been waiting with much anxiety and interest to hear your lecture on Roman Britain, from which I expected to derive much instruction; but most unfortunately I managed to take up the idea that it was to be delivered on the first Friday of *April*. . . . The object of my note just now, is to ask you whether you could kindly give me a reading of it if it was written, or if not, your notes for it, however rough and unconnected, would give me an idea of it, and would, in whatever shape they are, be most interesting to me.

"I am very much disappointed I did not hear it.—Believe me, yours very truly, William F. Skene."

FROM THE REV. A. STEWART, FREE CHURCH, KILLIN.

"*Notes of Tradition relative to St. Fillan.*—I fear I shall not be able to give you any satisfactory account of Saint Fillan, who was 'of old reverenced in the valleys of Breadalbane.' Those who held fast in their memories the traditions of the past, and who at times delighted to rehearse them in the ears of eager and attentive audiences, have nearly all passed away. St. Fillan, the son of Kentigerna, intent on good, entered Breadalbane by the wild Pass of Glenogle and Lairgilly. And the spot where he rested after ascending the rugged glen is still called after him—Beannach Fhaolain, or Fillan's Blessing. He had then in his hand a stout staff, surmounted by the celebrated coigreach, on which the venerable man rested,

and pronounced his blessing on the lovely landscape which opened to his view. A spring of excellent water, from which he refreshed himself, is still called after him—Iobar Fhaolain, or Fillan's Well. It is the very spot where a traveller of taste, as the Saint doubtless was, would naturally rest, and I do not wonder that, refreshed by the spring, and delighted by the magnificent scenery, he should open his mouth with blessings. . . .

"Killin has many memorials of him. The greatest of the annual markets is called after him. . . . There was long at the mill a stone called Fillan's Chair, and several smooth stones with holes in them which were in some way connected with the Saint. At one time the application of them was supposed to be efficacious in curing certain diseases, and each stone was believed to have a specific virtue. Their work, however, is ended, and now they lie unheeded in a niche of the mill. . . ."

No note of inquiry or of information that promised to help him in his antiquarian researches was overlooked. A remark which to another man was an end of the matter, often came to him as a hint of the existence of substantial materials in quarters not hitherto surveyed, or as the first step to discoveries of interest and importance. But he never forgot to name the author of the hint. He never kicked away the ladder by which he had begun to climb.

Schemes for work and hours of idleness are noticed in letters to a friend:—

"*30th June.*

"Yesterday I was sending off some books to America, and set a copy of Addresses aside for you. I have been elected lately an honorary member of two of the chief American Medical Societies, and was returning thanks for it.

"The gentleman who carries out the parcel is a physician who has been living in Queen Street for some weeks. He has, I fear, a fatal tumour in his side; and there was this true romance in his case. A lady here of fortune (some £30,000) wished to

marry him; but her friends protested no, till fate proved whether the tumour were mortal or not.

"We are all greatly interested in a Medical Bill which comes on for discussion in the House of Commons to-night. The Professors here and the College of Physicians are very anxious for it—the College of Surgeons very anxious against it. I hope it will pass, and end all the disputations on medical reforms. Two Edinburgh doctors are up in London canvassing—one 'for,' and another 'against'—both Drs. Wood, Alexander and Andrew. I do think some M.P.s will get confused between the two Woods, and the two Colleges they represent.

"Dr. Alexander W. was one of the candidates for the Practice of Physic Chair, and all but got it. He will, I think, very probably be made President of the College of Physicians next November.

"There is some talk of making an Academy of Medicine here, limited to twenty members. I proposed it two years ago, and now I think it will likely go on. The difficulty will consist in the election of the first twenty men. Mr. Syme seems rather against; but it would, I believe, be sure to succeed and do good. We must, however, first wait and see the result of medical reform, or whether there is any medical reform or not.

"Last week I put on a 'wishing-cap,' and desired a visit to York, to look over again some surgical instruments in the Roman collection there. Accordingly I got, two days afterwards, a summons to see a patient at York; but was unable to start on account of various midwifery cases. I have only been one night at home for nearly a week now, have consequently got most of them over, and am living in the hope of a white day in the York Museum, on Saturday or Monday.

"Some thirty or forty of us doctors (in England, Scotland, and Ireland) are to be invited immediately to visit the Medical Association of the United States, which this year meets in Albany. All our expenses to America and back, and there, are to be paid. Is not that something 'cute, and smart, and

handsome too in the M.D.s of America? I wonder how many will accept and go."

"Some weeks ago I wrote you a long note or letter, when tied up at a weary, long case. If it still exists in Queen Street I will forward it *with* this.

"We have had all an exciting and agreeable week with the meeting at Edinburgh of the Archæological Institute of London. Nothing but dinners and evening parties. One night I was so foolish as give a lecture, and showed them, among other Roman relics, a Roman nursing-bottle, which I lately found in the York Museum, when up on a professional visit. See all the doings recorded in this week's *Athenæum*.

"There have been lots of foreign doctors among us this summer. *Four* were down here at dinner one day lately. . . .

"I have worked very hard all summer; one day last week I saw patients in one continuous stream from one to past seven o'clock at home, and seldom have got out of the house till near six. So I am determined to have ten or twelve days' fun. Mrs. S. and I will start on Wednesday (so I propose to-night), and go perhaps to Ireland, perhaps to the Rhine. The house (I am told) *must* be cleaned and repainted. So be it. I have not had a holiday for two or three years. Don't I deserve one? Don't vote against it.

"Professor Miller gave a capital address to the graduates on Friday last—a sermon—and recommended them to marry, because Mr. Syme had recommended the reverse two years ago. At least so Mr. S. whispered to me, and so indeed did Miller himself state to Dr. Laycock.

"One of my nieces, who went away in 1840 to Australia, a very little girl of three or four, came here two weeks ago, a *very* nice and very good-looking married wife. Her husband has fought his own way up, and, though only thirty, commands one of the largest ships in the London and Australian trade. Next year he wishes to sail a ship of his own, and I intend to

go halves with him. This summer I get a return of £2700 from my three Liverpool vessels, which is a better return than I ever yet got from railways.

"Did I tell you when I last wrote that Professor Thomson and I have taken out a joint-patent? The specifications are to be now lodged very soon. . . .

"Riddell, in his Dictionary, spells—the stupid fellow—camelopard with an 'leo.'

"Wherever Jessie and I may go, I doubt if we will see any place so pretty as the Forth and its shores. One day last week I crossed from Burntisland with one of the Eastern heroes, and he declared the scenery of the Bosphorus to be a joke to the scenery of the Forth opposite Granton.

"Dreadfully hot. I write without a coat. Yesterday I was out at Mr. Monteith of Carstairs, and we dined in the open air, on the banks of the Clyde. It was beautiful.

"But I must not weary you out.—Yours very sincerely,

"J. Y. Simpson."

Dr. Simpson's attention was much occupied during the early part of the summer of 1858 with a new discovery, which he announces for the first time to Dr. Alexander Simpson, in the following note :—

"52 Queen Street, Edinburgh, 1*st June* 1858.

"My dear Alick,—I have enclosed two circular notes, perhaps the easiest mode for you drawing money.

"At present, and for some time past, I have been busy studying and experimenting upon metallic ligatures as substitutes for silk and thread in stitching wounds and tying arteries. They do *not* irritate and ulcerate like organic ligatures, and I do believe their introduction will in a great degree revolutionize the treatment of wounds. I fancy that I am the first who has ever applied them as ligatures to vessels laid open by the course of the knife in the human subject. As ligatures they excite only adhesive inflammation; not ulcerative, suppurative,

and gangrenous inflammation, as organic ligatures do. I find iron and silver wire the simplest, platinum excellent. Now I want you to get a view of a work of Purmannus on Surgery. He practised at Breslau, about 1700, and wrote various books. Heister, in his large work on Surgery (Book I. chap. xiii. § 13), says Purmannus united wounds of the tongue with silver sutures. I cannot get Purmannus's book here. Find it, and make a full extract for me of the passage. Heister's reference is, 'See Purman's Surgery, P. I. cap. vi.'

"Again, Dieffenbach in his 'Operative Chirurgie' (1845), vol. i. p. 577, refers to Sosset using gold threads in stitching vesico-vaginal fistulæ. Who is Sosset, and *where* are his papers? *Do* find them. I am publishing three papers on the subject in the *Medical Times*.

"See if any German author or surgeon alludes to metallic sutures or metallic ligatures.

"Kindest respects to Kolliker, Reniker, etc.—Yours always,

"JAMES Y. SIMPSON.

"*P.S.*—There is a great contest for the Chemistry. I think that Dr. Lyon Playfair will easily win the race. Enclosed are two bits of the iron wire used in my experiments. Write me very soon. You will find out from some of the surgeons, as old Textor, if metallic sutures have been long used in Germany, and by whom. J. Y. S."

For several years the subject of Medical Reform, referred to in one of the notes given above, had much occupied the Faculty. All qualified practitioners saw its importance, and felt that steps would have to be taken for the permanent adjustment of the relations between the Universities and the medical corporations and schools. It was necessary, too, that the value of academical honours should be defined, that qualified practitioners should be protected against quacks, and that something should be done to secure a fair amount of literary attainments in candidates before they were allowed to enter

on purely professional studies, it being notorious that some doctors

> "Admitted to that honoured name,
> Had, without learning, found a way to fame."

In the absence of a national measure to secure such ends, attempts had been made to attain some of them by the University and the corporations coming to a mutual understanding. But such compacts, as, for example, one entered into in 1842 between the University of Edinburgh on the one hand, and the College of Physicians and College of Surgeons on the other, with the approval of the Home Secretary, did not do much to smooth the way when action came to be taken for a national measure. They tended rather to complicate matters and retard progress. There was—at least, there was believed to be—a disposition on the part of the corporations to steal a march on the University. This led to "minutes" of accusation, and "minutes" of defence. Clouds gathered. The medical atmosphere got into a highly electric condition. So much so, indeed, that, even at this date, one cannot peruse these strongly-worded documents, and the account of the state of matters as brought out in Dr. Simpson's correspondence, without some excitement, and an unaccountable amount of interest. Neither can one help becoming a partisan at once. But to take rank on one side is easier than to keep it. A species of dualism, not Platonic, came in to add to the interest and the intricacy. It became apparent that members of one body who happened also to be members of another, whose interests for the time were diverse and conflicting, found themselves able to act heartily, and it is to be supposed honestly, with both. A reliable theory of specific identity is still a desideratum in circumstances like these.

At last the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons to examine into the subject of Medical Reform, with the view of a Bill being passed that would deal with it in all its aspects, held out the promise of a speedy settlement. In

the spring of 1852, Dr. Simpson began to take a more earnest and active interest in the subject than he seems to have done before. This he continued to do till the Bill became law. To write the history of the movements, to describe the checks to its progress in the want of a right understanding among the various public bodies concerned, to chronicle the stages of the investigation by the Committee and to record the astonishment of its members at the conflicting statements of witnesses, to narrate the sharp passages at arms between committee-men and promoters, to indicate the nature of the Bill ultimately passed into law, and to note the good fruits it has already borne, would demand a volume at least equal to the present in size. Such a work might be one of permanent value to the profession. It would even be one of interest to outsiders, were it for no other reason than the illustration it would afford of the immense trouble, unwearied devotion, and unselfish endeavour most freely and heartily bestowed upon it by statesmen and professional men. Dr. Simpson was kept informed of every step taken, of the obstacles thrown in the way of progress, and of the quarters where a word from him would be helpful in removing these. And he was ever ready to act. A message sent by a patient, a telegram, or a run to London, was never grudged. In going over his correspondence during these negotiations, I have been much impressed by the evidence of the large views and untiring effort brought to bear on the matter by Lord Elcho and Mr. Cowper. The persistent application, great ability, and untiring zeal of Dr. Alexander Wood, Edinburgh, and Dr. Storrar, London, are equally conspicuous. It is clear that both of these gentlemen, while representing corporate bodies, had ever in view in all their efforts the best interests of the whole profession. The letters of Mr. Black, then one of the members for Edinburgh, also show how much work he undertook in order to make good the completeness and value of the Bill. I have referred to this subject in this very general way, more as an introduction to Dr. Christison's

estimate of the value of Dr. Simpson's efforts in its behalf than as a statement of the circumstances connected with the passing of the Bill. He had in the outset given the movement a good direction. At the Manchester Exhibition, in a conversation with two influential members of Parliament, he "put his foot," as he said, "through Headlam's objectionable clauses, and raised all this hubbub among the medicals." Almost to the last hour of its progress in the House of Commons he dreaded some mishap, and took pains to urge watchfulness over Scottish interests.

"St. James's Place, *July* 4, 1858.

"Dear Dr. Simpson,—I hope and believe your fears to be groundless as regards Mr. Cowper and the Medical Bill.

"He *must* stand by his Bill, and will lose it if he does not. I have no fear of Mr. Headlam being able to introduce his clauses.—Yours very truly, Elcho."

"*July* 5.

"Dear Sir,—I am glad to inform you that my Bill went through Committee without any material alteration. Headlam's amendments did not meet with any favour from Walpole, as I feared when I wrote to you, and a majority of 87 declared the opinion of the House.

"We are now safe, unless the Colleges can bewitch the Lords,—Yours ever, W. C."

The British Medical Association held its twenty-sixth annual meeting in Edinburgh, in the last week of July 1858. Dr. Christison presided at the annual dinner of the Association, in the Hopetoun Rooms, Queen Street. When proposing "Prosperity to the approaching birth of the Medical Council of the British Nation," Dr. Christison, after having referred to the action of the Universities and Medical Corporations in behalf of the Medical Reform Bill just become law, said,—"He suspected that very few in the meeting had been aware that an attempt had been made at the eleventh hour to alter the new Bill most materially from the principles which not only were enunciated by Mr. Walpole as the principles which were to

characterize the measure, but which were likewise fully tested by two votes of the House of Commons. If the Bill had passed finally in the shape in which it passed through the Committee of the House of Lords, the result would have been that this Medical Council would have had the power of actually telling Sir Charles Hastings, and many other eminent practitioners, what rank they were to hold in their profession, whether they were simple doctors of medicine, or physicians, or what; and if they had that power, knowing the feeling of many members of the Council, he had little hesitation in saying that Sir Charles Hastings, the principal founder and originator of that great Association, would not be allowed to rank as physician. Now to whom were they indebted for this great evil being prevented? They were indebted to the University of Edinburgh, and to none else—nay, they were indebted for it principally to one member of that University, his colleague, Professor Simpson. They had now an idea how narrow an escape they had had from that total overturning of the principles which, up to the present moment, had characterized every step in the progress of medical reform. On the afternoon of Saturday last, he (Dr. Christison) got by the merest chance a copy of the Bill as it had passed through the Lords' Committee, and he at once saw that a clause had been introduced materially altering the Bill. That evening Dr. Simpson received a telegram from London, and next morning he got a letter showing the alteration which had taken place. He immediately said, 'I will start this evening for London, and try what can be done.' He (Dr. Christison) would not trouble the meeting with all the details; he would say nothing of the parties who attempted to introduce the alteration. (Cries of 'Name, name.') No, he would not give names; he would only mention facts, to which he could pledge himself; he could not pledge himself as to the authors. He could, however, pledge himself further to this, that it was in consequence of the exertions of Dr. Simpson, with the assistance which he got from powerful medical and other friends in London, that in the

course of one short day—in the course of a very few hours—the alterations were expunged, and the Bill restored to its original condition."

Referring to the success of this annual meeting, the conductor of the Journal says, in an editorial article:—"The Edinburgh meeting will form, without doubt, an important epoch in the annals of the Association. It was held at a moment when the fate of the Reform Bill, on which the eyes of the whole profession were fixed, was finally determined. The fruit of a quarter of a century's growth was expected to be plucked in the midst of our rejoicing. And so indeed it was; for, at the brilliant *conversazione* at the Royal College of Physicians, the telegraphic despatch just received by Dr. Simpson was read aloud by Sir Charles Hastings; and the noble hall rang again with cheers at the announcement that the Bill had passed. It seemed, indeed, as though the struggle with respect to this measure, which grew the fiercest towards its close, and which was not altogether unmarked by foul play on the part of our opponents, had been prolonged purposely in order that the final triumph should be announced by those who had borne the burden and the heat of the day."

At the sitting of the Association, on the 31st July, Dr. Simpson delivered an address characterized, it was said, by "persuasive eloquence" as well as by high scientific qualities. At its close, "Mr. J. B. Brown (London) moved, 'That the cordial thanks of this meeting be given to Professor Simpson for his very able and interesting address.' They all had known Professor Simpson's high reputation in Midwifery for many years past; they all had known his great skill, his indomitable industry, his wonderful memory, and his great genius for applying discoveries in science to purposes of practical utility, but he had no hesitation in saying that none of them had any idea, with his many other eminent acquirements, he possessed in so remarkable a degree the power, of which they that day had a proof, of delivering an address on a most difficult subject,

in the most pleasing and interesting way which one could imagine.

"Mr. Stedman (Guildford) seconded the resolution, which was carried amidst loud applause."

During the meeting of the Association he had as his guests Sir Charles Hastings, Dr. Forbes Winslow, and other men of eminence.

Writing at the opening of the Session to a friend already referred to, he says:—

"Great perturbation seems to be going on about the election of President to the College of Physicians on the 4th of next month. They say there are six candidates. It is so delightful to be out of the scrape altogether. If I go, I shall vote for Dr. Alex. Wood, because I feel sure he would do most good at present to the College. . . . Yesterday I signed the patent for making oil out of asphalte. Mr. Syme has had an angry paper quarrel with Mr. Ferguson of London; squabbles ever. He and I had a long talk to-day on a subject which, if effected, will work a change on some of the University Chairs, and with which some of my colleagues would be at first displeased. I never began the winter Session so unwillingly, as the summer was one of the brightest and happiest in all my past life. I feel sometimes as if I must give up working, as it is often overwhelming. My brother at Bathgate gives up his shop next week, and confines himself henceforth to his duties as banker. I have got the present of a Staffordshire dinner service from my friends at Trentham. What a beautiful place it is! I discovered two months ago a beautiful Irish church (perhaps a thousand years old) on Incheolm, opposite Granton, and am very proud of it. Mr. Thackeray is here, lionizing it strongly, and roaring very loudly."

Perhaps the unwillingness to enter on the work of the Session sprung from dislike of "College squabbles." For some time Professor Syme and he had lived on terms apparently not unfriendly. But that old feelings of dislike still kept their ground is sufficiently plain from the following notes:—

"College, *Nov.* 9, 1858.

"My dear Sir,—I enclose a letter I have received from Mr. Syme, in which he regrets having applied to a statement made by you the expression 'false and calumnious,' and begs leave to withdraw that expression.—I am, my dear Sir, yours faithfully, John Lee.

"Professor Simpson, Queen Street."

"2 Rutland Street, Edin., *Nov. 9th*, 1858.

"Very Reverend Sir,—I regret that at the meeting of Senatus on Saturday last I applied the expression 'false and calumnious' to a statement by Dr. Simpson, and beg that you will permit me to withdraw it.—I remain very respectfully,

"James Syme.

"The Very Reverend Principal Lee."

Matters of another kind are referred to in Mrs. Norton's note. The contrast is very pleasant :—

"Macgregor's Hotel, 53 Princes Street.

"Dear Dr. Simpson,—I hope you will remember your promise that you would help me to make acquaintance with Mr. Ballantyne, author of the 'Robber Kitten' and other works. I am in Edinburgh only for a few days, but I am so often in Scotland, that I should be sorry to miss any opportunity of claiming acquaintance whenever I *do* come. I was much interested in learning, through you, who the writer was whose amusing children's stories I had been distributing to the rising generation.

"What a blessed thing to find an author religiously faithful to the memory of days when *impossibilities* were considered a more agreeable foundation for a story than scientific facts! Who would not rather climb the beanstalk with Jack, visit the wolf with Red Riding-Hood, or take an airing in Cinderella's rat-carriage, than know all about the kings of England, or the habits of beavers or otters?

"The *wild oats* sown by that Robber Kitten pleases my fancy. Tell Mr. Ballantyne I sent it (amongst others) to the

prettiest, most daring little child of three years living in Macbeth's old stronghold, Glamis Castle.

"I hope it will fire him to 'doughty (I mean naughty) deeds.'—Believe me, yours truly and obliged,

"CAROLINE NORTON.

"*Dec.* 17*th*, 1858."

Equally pleasant is a letter from an old friend, in the opening of 1859 :—

"HOTEL CASTIGLIONE, 12 RUE DE CASTIGLIONE.

"MY DEAR DOCTOR,—You are so much occupied that we never know whether you read our letters or not; but be that as it may, I venture, notwithstanding, to drop a line to let you know that an old friend of more than 'a quarter of a century's' standing is still alive. I can tell you a curious, nay, in human nature, even an extraordinary fact. During all that time there was never one disagreeable, or even approximating to disagreeable, word betwixt us. Singular enough, when we think of the various vicissitudes we both have come through, and how much, and in how many various ways, we have come in contact!

"For more than five years I have not been one day out of Paris, and am therefore become so much of a Parisian that really, without any affectation, I scarcely know what is interesting and what not to people out of it. I might be telling you things you care nothing for, and I might be omitting things of the greatest interest to you in Edinburgh.

"I can only say this: I shall tell you at any time whatever you may ask.

"Nobody here believes, or ever did believe, in war. Your free press and your debates in Parliament do keep England in a constant flurry about politics. How France is prospering, now that she has neither!

"The Established Church of Scotland have a regular service here, and at a meeting of the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh in October last, they passed a resolution requesting me to manage for them in Paris, which I have done as yet. Mr.

Robertson of the Greyfriars is officiating at present. He tells me he is intimate with you, and often meets Mrs. Simpson in some of his missions.

"Although I never hear from you, I hear plenty of you, and have plenty inquiring about you, and when you are coming over.

"When I meet with any Edinburgh body, I (now-a-days) never ask if they know you—that is quite superfluous—so I always ask when did they see you last.—Yours ever sincerely,

"JAMES MOFFAT."

The labours of the Session, on which he had entered with less heart for professional work than usual, seemed to influence his health more than such duties had done before. He was obliged to take to bed in spring, and for several weeks to withdraw from practice. But Acupressure, as we shall see, got much attention. He also recurred to a subject that had been before him in the previous year—materials used in the ancient cupping-vessels. Dr. George Wilson thus refers to this:—

"*May* 21, 1859.

"MY DEAR ARCHÆO-MEDICUS,—Is there any knowledge as to the *material* of the Greek and Roman cupping-vessels? In the extract from Facciolati I find them referred to '*duo genera sunt, æneum et corneum.*' This indicates the possibility of their having once been horns, and seeing that the ancient Egyptians used horns as cupping instruments, we may reasonably suppose that the device was transferred to Greece and Rome.

"On the other hand, Facciolati refers to '*Cucurbita, et frequentius cucurbitula*' as 'etiam instrumentum medicorum, etc., quod *forma* cucurbitam referat.' Here solely the *shape* of the gourd, and not its function, is alluded to as the source of its secondary application to the doctor's instrument. Perhaps the notion I took into my head before seeing Facciolati is not worth holding. Still a gourd does appear to be used at the present day for cupping by the Africans of certain tribes, whilst the same or other tribes use the horn. If the Greek

and Roman physicians were familiar only with the horn, why give their brass (?) vessel the shape of a gourd, and not of a horn? May we not suppose that they had the tradition both of *cupping-horns and cupping-gourds*, and, retaining for the cheaper sort the material and perhaps the shape of the former, gave to the metallic ones the shape as well as the name of the latter?

"The calabash, the hollow horn, and the sea-shell are the three ready-formed vessels of moderate capacity that come handiest to man; and it is curious to see all of them imitated in clay, or glass, and metal, as the arts go on.

"I did not intend this technological blast, but it would be curious to know what the materials and shape of the ancient cupping-glasses were.—Yours ever faithfully,

"GEORGE WILSON."

He had before thought that in remote parts of the land traces of rude vessels of this sort were likely to be met with, and when visited by the Rev. John Ingram, a Free Church minister in Shetland, an opportunity occurred to get the information sought for:—

"HILLSIDE, UNST, SHETLAND, 23*d Nov.* 1858.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I send you a specimen of the cupping-horn you spoke of when I had the pleasure of last seeing you. It is truly a very simple affair; but it is just what is used, and indeed one that has been in use. I might have got one more neatly done up, but I thought you would like it best in the rude unpolished state in which it is found in the hands of the operators here. What shall I say of all your kindness to me and other members of this family? When I think of your attention on many occasions to my late dear wife, to myself personally, and now again to my sister, I cannot find words to express my gratitude, and I shall not attempt it.

"Excuse me for troubling you. I know you have not much time for reading such communications.—I remain, my dear Sir, yours most sincerely, JOHN INGRAM."

On his return from a fortnight's visit to England he wrote to Mrs. Tootal :—

"*May* 22, 1859.

"Jessie has shown me your letter, and I am deeply grieved to learn that you are suffering under so much sorrow and affliction. I fear that you would have little or no peace if residing in my house just now, and not such rest and quietude as you require. Besides my own immediate family, we have at present living with us (1.) Mr. Stewart of Killin, who is attending the sittings of the General Assembly; (2.) Mrs. Simpson of Bathgate, who came to town two days ago, suffering severely from a heart complaint; (3.) Miss Elizabeth Petrie, who has been here several months, but goes home soon to Man; and (4.) Miss Wilhelmina Grindlay, who has been several months in London with my son James, and is now taking care of him here according to the directions of Mr. Startin, under whose professional charge he was in England. We are partly divided between Queen Street and Viewbank.

"The shores of the Firth are just now most beautiful, and soothing too; and if you will allow us to look out for quiet quarters for you at Trinity or Granton I think you would find yourself 'the better' of the very change and the locality.

"I will not try to say how sorry I feel for you in your grief; but I trust it will speedily pass, and only end in greater happiness for you. Believe me that when I say I shall feel rejoiced if I can be in any way instrumental in bringing about so good an end, I do not speak in the *common* complimentary language of the world; for I remain your very sincere friend, J. Y. Simpson."

The reader will perceive the feebleness of this attempt to speak a word in season to one who at the time was weary. He had not yet learned that art in the school of Him "who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

CHAPTER XII.

To Mrs. Pender—The Cat-stane—Address on Archæology—Questions for the Spiritualists—Literary Work—Correspondence on Acupressure—Aberdeen Medical School and Acupressure—An Incomplete Life—Groping after God—"Born Again"—Reason and Faith—Zeal of First Love—Christian Work—Theology—Death of Jamie—Letters—Addresses—Prayer—Carrubber's Close Mission—Mrs. Barbour's Poem, "Jamie."

Dr. Simpson had for some time been on most friendly terms with Mr. and Mrs. Pender of Crumpsall House, Manchester. In both he found qualities which quickly won his esteem and regard. The committee of the Manchester Athenæum, aware of this friendship, and being desirous that he should deliver one of their yearly course of lectures, approached him in 1860 through Mrs. Pender:—

"11 *March*, '60.

"My dear Mrs. Pender,—I would say 'No,' and that right peremptorily, to any other friend I have if asked to go to England to give a lecture; but I cannot feel it in my heart to do so to Mr. Pender. There are, however, two great, very great, obstacles, viz., first, What could *I* lecture on to the Manchester Athenæum that could possibly interest them? and second, Would I be sure to get off from Edinburgh for a day to give it, provided I found a subject? On this second point I can venture at this moment to say nothing. On the first point (a fit subject), I fancy that anything connected with 'obstetrics' would scarcely answer, however novel it might be in the Athenæum;

and aught medical or physiological would savour too much of the shop. Manchester was originally an old Roman colony. Would 'Britain as a Roman Colony,' or 'The Roman Colonization of Britain,' be a subject likely to interest? Of course such a subject would 'let in' the old Roman colonial life at Manchester, etc., the cities, walls, etc. etc., they have left us in the island, their colonial commerce, and so forth.

"Please let Mr. Pender and you think of this, or any other subject; but do not fix anything till I can see my way more clearly. *When* would the lecture be required?—Yours always truly, J. Y. Simpson."

TO A FORMER PATIENT.

"Edinburgh, *April* 4, 1860.

"I am very sorry to hear that you have been so wretchedly ill, and very happy that you are so far better. Additional strength will soon, I hope, come.

"Your letter puts me in mind of Dr. Madden and Dr. Oppenheim being asked to prescribe for the ladies of the Grand Sultan at Constantinople. They were only allowed to see and feel one hand and a bit of the wrist of their patient, and from the pulse and skin of this one wrist and hand it was averred any doctor should be able to tell, and tell at once too, if the lady who owned the hand or wrist was deaf, or blind, or dyspeptic, or 'colicky,' or aught else, and all without seeing the patient's body or face, or asking her one single question. They may be able to tell diseases in England in this way, and cure them, but we cannot do so in Scotland yet.

"Please tell me when you move Southport-wards. On Friday I am going up to Cumberland to see a case. I wish it were further south, and I might 'pop in.' But I am under a half promise to be in Manchester at the end of this month—to do what? Guess. It requires a new sheet to tell. To lecture at the Athenæum! On what? I really do not know.

"I enclose a paper—a medical one—for you. The 'rage'

in 52 at present is Acupressure, and various other topics of an allied kind.

"Yesterday we had twenty-eight at dinner in the hall here meeting Sir David and Lady Brewster, our new Principal. They are living in my cottage at Trinity for a month or two, as they could not get a house in town.—Yours very sincerely,

"J. Y. Simpson."

In 1861 Dr. Simpson communicated an elaborate and learned paper to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, on an "Inscribed Stone" in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. This he afterwards published separately with a dedication to Mrs. Pender. It is entitled—"The Cat-Stane, Edinburghshire: Is it not the Tombstone of the Grandfather of Hengist and Horsa?" This monograph supplies good illustrations of his descriptive power, the extent and variety of his recondite information, and his skill in the use of the best methods of historical criticism.[1]

TO MRS. PENDER.

"52 Queen Street, Edinburgh.

"My dear Mrs. Pender,—I have sent by this post a copy of a paper on the Cat-stane. It should have been sent weeks ago; but the binding delayed it. I have taken the liberty of dedicating it to you, and only wish that I had any better means of testifying my heart-felt esteem for, and gratitude to, you and Mr. Pender for all your kindness to Wattie and myself. If I had had leisure to re-write the paper quietly, I could, and should, have brought out the argument better, but as it stands it seems to have convinced some of our best antiquaries in England and here.

"Enclosed also is a little poem privately printed by Mrs. Barbour. Her daughter Margot was here with us and told her the incidents.

"I hope Annie is keeping stronger, and is better even than

[1] *Archæological Essays*, vol. i.

before her attack. Give her my kindest love. My wife and children are at Viewbank. We have an American cousin, Captain Jervie (some hundred times, or at least some hundred years, removed), paying us a visit—he is a strong Carolinian; and next week expect a large addition to our household, as my mother-in-law and some of her daughters are coming down.

"I met Mr. Drummond last night hastening across the Mound to his 'school' at Mr. Ritchie's.

"I was sorry to hear that Mr. Pender was not quite well. I trust he is better, and taking due care of himself. Pray tell him I did not of course draw his cheque, as I owe him a hundredfold more than he owes me.—Yours ever, J. Y. Simpson."

In the same year it fell to him, as one of the Vice-Presidents of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, to deliver the annual address. His subject was "Archæology: Its Past and its Future Work."[1] The annual address is generally given in the small room at the south end of the Museum, where the usual meetings are held. But on this occasion a change was made. The spacious room of the Royal Society was obtained, and special invitations were issued. The room was crowded. All marvelled at the immense store of curious, recondite, and varied knowledge embodied in the discourse. Look, and voice, and action, showed how much the lecturer himself enjoyed the occasion, and how heartily he kept to his task for about two hours.

Within a few months of each other, Dr. Simpson had written and published "The Cat-Stane," "Archæology," and a treatise on purely Medical Antiquities, contributed to the Transactions of the Epidemiological Society—three *quartos*, any one of which might have been fairly held a good year's work by an ordinary man. But these did not constitute the largest part of the literary and scientific work of the same period. His correspondence with regard to Acupressure was increasing in

[1] *Archæological Essays*, vol. i.

bulk and importance. Every successful application added to the demands on his time. A simple report from an operator did not satisfy him. He wished to know all about the case. Acupressure was, as he says in a note given above, "the rage" in 52 Queen Street! Every post brought him tidings of its successful application in most important and dangerous amputations. These he was classifying and preparing for a permanent place in the literature of Operative Surgery. They now form a large illustrated octavo volume, of nearly 600 pages. In the Preface to this work he says: "Acupressure, as a new hæmostatic (blood-stopping) process, founded on the temporary metallic compression of arteries, was first described to the Royal Society of Edinburgh at their meeting on 19th December 1859." A paper promised by a Fellow of the Society had not been forthcoming after the billet was issued. But Dr. Simpson intimated to Professor Balfour, the secretary, his willingness to take the place of the defaulter. Before the time of meeting, when the members learned that he was to read a paper, there was a good deal of curiosity, and many guesses as to its nature. Mr. Milne Home was in the chair; but there were few leading medical men present. Abstracts of the communication were forwarded on the same evening to England, the Continent, and America. He refers to the preparation of this paper in a note to Dr. Turner Keith:—"Now-a-days I seldom or never have time to write, except when I am myself 'confined,' as I am this moment. . . . I got the Acupressure paper written at a house in the country, where I had to sleep for two or three nights watching a case of diphtheria." Almost all the points, which were afterwards much amplified and fully illustrated, were touched on in his first communication, showing how carefully he had considered the bearings of the process. The abstract in the Proceedings is as follows:—

"Professor Simpson made a communication on Acupressure, as a new mode of arresting surgical hæmorrhage. After describ-

ing the various methods of stanching hæmorrhage in surgical wounds and operations which the Greek, Roman, Arabic, and Mediæval surgeons employed, he gave a short history of the introduction of the ligature of arteries, and spoke of it as—with the occasional exception of torsion for the smallest arteries—the hæmostatic means almost universally employed in chirurgical practice at the present day. But he thought that surgery must advance forward a step further than the ligature of arteries, particularly if surgeons expected—as seemed to be their unanimous desire—to close their operative wounds by the immediate union or primary adhesion of their sides or walls.

"All the march of modern surgery has been in the direction of attempting to increase the chances of the union of surgical wounds by the first intention, by diminishing more and more the irritation derived from the presence and action of the ligatures supposed to be inevitably required for the arrestment of the hæmorrhage. By the new hæmostatic process of acupressure, Dr. Simpson hopes to overcome in a great degree all those difficulties, as by it he expected to arrest the hæmorrhage attendant upon surgical wounds *without leaving permanently any foreign body whatever* in the wound itself. It was an attempt to bring bleeding wounds, in common surgery, to the condition of wounds in *plastic surgery*, where no arterial ligatures were used, and where union by the first intention was in consequence the rule, and not the exception, to it.

"Dr. Simpson stated that he had tested, with perfect success, the effects of acupressure as a means of effectually closing arteries and stanching hæmorrhage, first upon the lower animals, and lately in two or three operations on the human subject. The instruments which he proposed should be used for the purpose were very sharp-pointed slender needles or pins of passive or non-oxidizable iron, headed with wax or glass, and in other respects also like the hare-lip needles commonly

used by surgeons at the present day, but longer when circumstances required. They might be coated with silver or zinc on the surface, if such protection were deemed requisite.

"That needles used for the purpose of acupressure, and passed freely through the walls and flaps of wounds, will not be attended by any great degree of disturbance or irritation, is rendered in the highest degree probable by all that we know of the tolerance of living animal tissues to the contact of metallic bodies. Long ago John Hunter pointed out that small-shot, needles, pins, etc., when passed into and imbedded in the living body, seldom or never produced any inflammatory action, or none at least beyond the stage of adhesive inflammation, even when lodged for years. Some time ago, when the subject of acupuncture specially attracted the attention of medical men, Cloquet, Pelletan, Pouillet, and others, showed that the passage and retention of long acupuncture needles was attended with little or no irritation in the implicated living tissues. . . ."

The special excellences of the new method are forcibly put by Dr. Simpson in the following contrast :—

CONTRAST BETWEEN THE LIGATURE AND ACUPRESSURE.

The Ligature.	*Acupressure.*
1. Requires isolation of the end of the vessel.	Requires none.
2. Produces laceration of the two internal coats of the artery.	Produces none.
3. Produces strangulation of the external coat.	Produces none.
4. Leads on to ulceration or molecular destruction of the external coat at the constricted part.	Produces none.
5. Causes mortification of the artery at the tied point, and usually also below it.	Produces none.
6. Produces consequently a dead, decomposing slough of each part ligatured.	Produces none.

The Ligature.	*Acupressure.*
7. If organic, it imbibes animal fluids, which speedily decompose and irritate.	Requires only metallic needles or threads, which are incapable of imbibing animal fluids.
8. Requires to produce the highest stages of inflammation at each ligatured end, viz., ulceration, suppuration, and mortification.	Requires to produce inflammation up to the stage of adhesion only.
9. Is not removable except by the slow ulceration and sloughing of the ligatured vessel, which requires a period of from four or five to twenty days and more.	Is removable in an hour, a day, etc., at the will of the operator.
10. Generally requires two persons for its application.	Requires only one person.
11. Is frequently followed by secondary hæmorrhage, an effect of ulceration.	Is very seldom followed by secondary hæmorrhage, as there is no ulceration.
12. Sometimes fails altogether in cases of recurring secondary hæmorrhage.	Has succeeded under such circumstances where the ligature has failed.
13. Sometimes cannot be applied till the surgeon first exposes the bleeding vessel by the knife.	Does not necessarily require the exposure of the vessel, and therefore has sometimes prevented the necessity of using the knife.
14. Prevents, as a foreign body, adhesion by first intention along its tract as long as it remains.	Is early withdrawn, and is hence far less opposed to primary union.
15. Stops only the artery tied.	Stops generally both artery and vein.
16. Stops only *one* artery.	May close two or more smaller arteries by means of a single needle.
17. Is not unfrequently followed by surgical fever from leading to the formation and allowing absorption of septic matters.	Is much less likely to be followed by surgical fever, because it does not lead to the formation of septic matter, and closes the veins as well as arteries.
18. For these various reasons, primary union rare, healing slow, and septic or surgical fever not uncommon.	Primary union more frequent, healing quicker, and septic or surgical fever less common.

As was sure to be the case, controversy followed. In the work referred to, two chapters are devoted to answering the

objections against Acupressure by Professors Miller, Erichsen, Neudöver, Spence, Ferguson, and Syme. Many able surgeons took to the practice at once. It still continues to be carried out with great success in Aberdeen and elsewhere. Dr. Simpson was greatly gratified by the attitude of the Aberdeen Medical School, whose experience he afterwards laid before the profession, first in a communication to the *Lancet*, and then in a pamphlet, entitled "Notes on the Progress of Acupressure."

After introducing the subject, he quotes the following letter by Dr. William Keith, Aberdeen :—

". . . 'Acupressure,' writes Dr. Keith, 'here is *triumphant*—nothing else being dreamt of—and, I may say, in daily use. Within the last fourteen days I have employed it in the following operations :—In an amputation of the forearm acupressure by first mode at the elbow commanded the humeral before bifurcation, and the wound healed by first intention. I removed a large recurrent fibroid tumour for the third time in ten years. Deep dissection brought me in contact with the external carotid artery. And what of that? It was looped by the sixth mode in three seconds; and the case has gone on to a wish, the wound filling up with healthy granulations, as all the integument, being adherent and discoloured, was intentionally removed; the mass was like one's fist. On Wednesday last I amputated a thigh. Three vessels by your fourth mode, and three by the sixth mode, were secured. On Monday of this week I amputated two thighs. In one, four vessels required acupressure; in the other, six. The fourth and sixth modes [1] were used in about equal proportions. The speed with which the vessels were closed in each case hindered the loss of

[1] "These numerical references apply to excellent descriptions and plates of the different methods of performing acupressure given in the treatise of Drs. Pirrie and Keith. In their practice they do not notice one method which I have often employed to close minor vessels, and which I have seen my friend Dr. Heron Watson, Surgeon to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and to Chalmers's Hospital, use."

blood so entirely, that the sand-box only showed a spot of blood in its centre.—Yours very faithfully,

'WILLIAM KEITH.'

"Dr. Keith's letter attests the small quantity of blood that is lost when acupressure is properly used. . . . 'The confidence of the Aberdeen surgeons,' adds Dr. Keith, 'is now so firmly established in acupressure, that its use is the rule by the hospital staff.'

"In the way of illustrating these results, let me adduce an individual case—a kind of evidence which, to some minds, is more impressive than any mode or amount of reasoning. For this purpose I might cite several, but I shall content myself with an abridgment of the last of the thirty-two cases which Dr. Pirrie details. This thirty-second case was, like his first case, one of amputation of the thigh, on account of extensive disease of the knee-joint, in a 'delicate-looking' boy six years of age. The femoral and two other arteries were acupressed. The pins were withdrawn in forty-four hours, without, as the patient said, 'causing any pain.' 'After operation' (says Dr. Pirrie) 'I thought it necessary to caution the little fellow not to touch the acupressure-pins, which he called the pins with the beautiful [glass] heads, and I promised to give them to him after their removal. He took great care not to touch them, or allow any person except myself to do so; and, to his great delight, sent them home by his father for preservation until his return.' The stump healed perfectly, and throughout every part, by the first intention; and, as Dr. Pirrie expresses it, 'either by immediate union or by primary adhesion; and I am inclined to think it must have been by the former, as no medium of union is discernible at the edges of the wound.' No dressings were employed except a few metallic sutures, and three strips of isinglass-plaster, which were applied before the patient was removed from the operation-table. The sutures were all removed on the fourth day. After the operation the

little patient slept well, was anxious for his food, had no uneasy sensation of any kind, local or general, and was in the highest spirits. A few days after the amputation, when, observes Dr. Pirrie, 'I entered the ward with the surgical pupils of the hospital, he was whistling most beautifully the "Braes o' Mar," and amusing himself by passing a little model carriage over an inclined plane he had got constructed in his bed. He continued to whistle the above and other airs till it was his turn to be visited!'"

I am not competent to give an opinion on the merits, but it seems to me that, applying the ordinary rules of evidence in this controversy, a case is made out in favour of the new method as contrasted with the old. Perhaps, however, sentiment goes a good way in leading one to wish to see Chloroform and Acupressure walking hand in hand, as means of blessing to suffering humanity—

"Brethren by one master led."

"When," says Dr. Turner, "giving the Professor my limited but favourable experience of acupressure shortly after it was introduced, I had made jocular allusion to the fierce opposition this innovation was exciting, and the outrage he had committed on those sacred mysteries, the 'surgical principles,' to the unspeakable discomposure of the surgical mind. 'The surgical mind,' he said, 'is a very curious piece of metaphysics. I shall be quite content if acupressure begins to be thought of about a quarter of a century hence.'"

Dr. Simpson's successful career had hitherto developed only one side of his moral and intellectual nature. His faculties had found expression in one direction only, and that, while it stood alone, not the most permanently influential.

He had worked heartily, bravely, and persistently for bread and name, and fame, with an expenditure of strength, and a

devotion to duty seldom, if ever, equalled in his profession. He had worked, moreover, in the face of opposition that would have paralysed the energies of most men. His zeal and love for his profession continued strong and pure throughout. The rare bloom of vigour, freshness, and fondness of first love, so long as it continues the only love, characterized his views and feelings as to the work of a physician during all the changeful years of an absorbing practice. The youthful ideal was never lost. And in this spirit work was done whose fruits will last through the ages. He had enriched the healing art by great discoveries. He had introduced methods of treatment whose benefits will be always owned. Not in vain had multitudes of the suffering and sorrowful "waited for him as for the rain." And "he had chosen out their way, and been to them as one that comforteth mourners." Yet all the while his life was not complete. Genius, talents, and great attainments were, without stint or grudging, given to humanity. But he had not calmly and of purpose given any true thought to the adjustment of a relation higher than that between him and his fellow-men—the relation of his soul to God. There had, no doubt, been spasmodic endeavours after a religious life. When dark shadows fell athwart the bright joy of domestic life, when death took from him some on whom he had lavished his love, when the bitterness of self-reproach fell on him, because in controversy he had yielded to feelings and been influenced by motives unworthy of the truth for which he contended, or when some, on whose lasting gratitude he was warranted to count, gave him instead the hate which almost ever takes the place of thankfulness felt to be due but not rendered, in such circumstances he was disposed to cry "vanity," and set about trying to be good. But with the occasion "the religious fit" passed away. If good seed had fallen for a season, the surface of the moral nature was scarcely scratched. There was no deep ploughing—no stirring of the inmost being. Time soon hardened the soil.

Temptation came, and he fell away. Yet such experiences draw towards them the interest and sympathy of all good men. They shed light on a word whose significance in God's dealings with individual men is often not seen,—"I will hedge up thy way with thorns." While yet a child, Dr. Simpson had been impressed by the manifest goodness of his mother, and had ever remembered that, somehow, she differed from other members of the household. During his College life, all his thoughts were given to study or amusement. In the first years of his professional duties his path was rugged and thorny. A hard fight with straitened means and worldly difficulties kept him at work which engrossed his whole time and attention. In later years his very success brought its characteristic snares. He had fought his way into fame and worldly comfort. Was not this the end of his exertions—the highest and best reward? But his mother's prayers still followed him; and, increasingly, the prayers of those to whom he had brought health gathered round him. To have touched on such topics, even in 1860, in his presence, would have provoked a remark about fanatics or fanaticism. He had come to be regarded by many as a Christian. The title "Christian physician" was freely given to him. Schemes of Christian philanthropy were submitted for his approval. He was pressed to undertake duties which could only be done to profit by men consciously united to Christ. He had even reached to an intellectual perception of the true character of works not done as unto God. Yet he afterwards spoke of this period, as a time when he was living without God in the world. I know that to give expression to such truths is at the risk either, on the one hand, of underrating or depreciating the beneficial influence of the reflex light of Christianity on the lives of men, on the domestic circle, and on society; or, on the other hand, of alienating many from the views on whose reception so much depends. But a fair exhibition of Dr. Simpson's state of mind at this time demands this reference.

"What is meant," he once said to me, "by that text, 'Repentance from dead works'? What are dead works?" "The good works of natural men," was the reply. "But all are natural men?" "No; there is a birth not of nature—'born not of the will of the flesh, but of God.'" "Is that not a mere figure?" "In part, but a great truth underlies. Those who have not experienced the change of heart referred to are spoken of in the text—'the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.'" "What's the Greek?" "ψυχικὸς δὲ ἄνθρωπος." "But the 'dead works'?" "The good works of a man who has not believed in Christ—whose soul is still cut off from God. A living man in the Bible sense, can alone do living (good) works. 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.'" There was no reply. But years after, I heard him give expression to the same views, when addressing the people in the quiet village Free Church at Torphichen.

His repeated inquiries about the meaning of portions of Scripture, and the mode in which he looked at them, his interest in the Christian efforts of others, and his own satisfaction when asked to take part in them, were, no doubt, shedding around him most healthy influences. But he was, in the midst of them, trying to find a footing in the Kingdom of God, by his thoughts about religion and his occasional efforts in religious work. He was, however, on the threshold of an experience of a very different kind. He was about to become not another man only, but a new one, and to enter on a condition in which works and labours were to have their truest place, their most earnest and highest expression. To this he was now led. He heard the words, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." "Lord, I believe," was the response. The promise of salvation now realized in him, would, he felt convinced, be blessed also to those nearest and dearest

to him. "And thy house," he often trustfully repeated. The tidings of his change led many to say, "What hath God wrought!" To himself it was as the gift of a new sense. All familiar things were the same, and yet how different! To one class of men he felt called to repeat his experience, in the hope that they might become what he now was. To another, it was his delight to be "helpers of their joy." And now we have in Christ's dealings with men another "notable example of a sensitive, tender, self-analysing soul, living in sustained communion with God, while externally devoted to a large round of exacting public duties." Even his professional work was done more heartily and earnestly than before. His good works were no longer separated from spiritual life. They were its fruits, and were not now dead. His mental qualities, scientific attainments, and varied accomplishments, were laid at the feet of Him to whom in the olden time the star-guided students from the East brought their "gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh." He heard, for himself, the words—"Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." And he now said to others, as one who had joy in saying it, "We ourselves were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Another had joined that illustrious company of foremost men who, bringing all their great gifts and varied attainments with them, have entered the Kingdom of God as little children. To the list that holds the names of Newton, Boyle, Boerhaave, Cuvier, Abercrombie, Chalmers, Brewster, Lyndhurst, and other "chiefs of the mighties," we now add James Young Simpson's. With them

he had made that discovery of God's purpose in His creation which Augustine states so tenderly on the threshold of his Confessions:—"Fecisti nos ad Te, Domine, et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in Te." "What a curious psychological phenomenon this step of Simpson's is!" said a scientific friend; "I can't make it out. It looks downright fanaticism." Many heard with surprise of his change, and its fruits. But it was neither fanatical nor irrational. Neither term can be appropriately applied to a man when led to believe, with all his heart, in his own immortality, in the greatness of eternity, in the personal holiness of God, in his own sinfulness in God's sight, when he takes the testimony thereto even of his own heart and life, in the remission of sins by the blood of Christ[1]—very God, very Man, the substitute and surety for sinners—and in the fact of the soul's vital union by faith with Him who is the true God and eternal life.

We have seen that Dr. John Reid, the playmate, schoolfellow, companion, and fellow-worker in science of Dr. Simpson, had been led to see all this, when, like a stricken deer, he had gone with his fatal disease into solitude. And now Dr. Simpson himself attains to the same discovery. God works by means. In Reid's case the consciousness that he carried about with him a malady that was daily sapping the foundations of bodily life, was used by the Spirit of God to lead him to Christ. And now Reid's early associate was brought too, but by a different way. In a letter to a friend, written early in 1862, these words occur,—"I have a patient, a dear, dear friend. If you ever come north again, I have promised her you would meet. In a day or two I will send you a little beautiful book[2] she is just now publishing. She has, indeed, been a kind of 'well of living water' to me and mine." On the 9th of June

[1] "I often wondered what good men meant when they spoke so much about the Blood. I see it all now. It is just substitution."—Lord Lyndhurst.

[2] "The Child of the Kingdom." By M. F. B.

1861, this patient, after referring to an account he had given her of spiritual work then being done in Paris, added—"When I read with so much pleasure your antiquarian address sent last night, I thought, What if his next paper be on the work God is doing in the world, deciphering and analysing, as only he could do, the mysterious traces of the Divine Spirit in the living stones of the Temple He is raising in these days of ours to Jesus' praise? I often feel that while unflagging kindness carries you ever hither and thither on errands of mercy, it is the bounden privilege of grateful patients, who can themselves do so little, to follow your steps with earnest prayer. So you will maybe like to think that one at least—and how many?—is every morning asking the Lord Jesus to bless you and all your house with the full spiritual blessing He has to give." During the summer and autumn professional duty brought both Dr. Simpson and his nephew, Dr. Alexander Simpson, his assistant, frequently in contact with the earnest and devoted members of this patient's household. A warm friendship followed. Husband and wife and daughter were alike interested in the spiritual good of their medical attendants. Quiet words for Christ were spoken in quiet moments on a sick-bed. Prayer was continued. In another letter the same patient says:—"I am glad of an occasion to ask pardon if my last letter may have seemed like forming a judgment about the state of mind of another, with no data but intuition, *on which one should not act.* Let me not thus become one of those unfavourable specimens of Christianity, who are always coming in like stumbling-blocks to keep open-hearted, upright natures from seeking Christ. Many are hindered from seeking after the Master's fellowship by the distorted, dwarfed likenesses His people present. Why will all the narrow-mindedness not fly before the broad-flowing love that comes from Him? Why do the 'I' and 'My' start up still in those who *do* say truly, 'To me to live is Christ'? When one honestly sets out to try and be a Christian, he meets in the fore-front some Christians he would not change places

with. Once we have seen Jesus, this difficulty, like every other, vanishes. The Raphael touches live, shine, glow, and the sign-boards pass unnoticed. . . . What is to fill this heart to all eternity? When benevolence shall have run its course, when there shall be no sick to heal, no disease to cure; when all I have been engaged about comes to a dead stop, *what* is to fill this heart, and thought, and these powers of mine? Only the God-man! If *then*, why not now?"

One has an almost oppressive sense of the difficulty of rightly tracing the path of Dr. Simpson's experience at this time. In many parts of Scotland much power accompanied the faithful, earnest preaching of "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." The members of the circle where he was now a frequent visitor took a very lively interest in the religious movements of the time. For a season Dr. Simpson seemed to continue like Gideon's fleece, when the dew fell all around, but not on it. But the startling character of God's dealings at the time with some of Dr. Simpson's patients; the words spoken by friends years before; the memory of bereavements; and, now, the earnest pleading, not only of comparative strangers, but of one, at least, among his own near relatives, were all, in another hand than man's, becoming

"As grappling bonds that knit the soul to God."

Light had gone before, and love was coming after. He had become dissatisfied with himself, and was longing to know why. He was beginning to see sin, and to grope after the Saviour. "I felt I must go somewhere to-night. I thought of Duns and Hanna, but I have come to you." Then he added sadly, "I wish to come to Christ, but I don't see Him." Had no other word escaped from him, this spoken from the heart was enough: "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." But there was much communing and taking counsel. Before 1861 passed away, he entered a sick-room saying—"My *first* happy Christmas. My *only* happy one."

Now, to say the least, it would not have been wise either on the part of Dr. Simpson or his friends, so to act and talk as if all true, living, personal religion can only be reached in this fashion. "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." God's method of dealing with one man should never be made the rule of His dealing with all. Some are sanctified from the womb. Some grow gradually up into the image of Christ, scarce realizing the mighty change being wrought in them. At such you might ask in vain for a record of the time when they first began to love God, or for a statement of the means used by God's Holy Spirit in their change. In others, conversion is abrupt, rapid, and at once conspicuous. Like Peter's wife's mother, the fever is no sooner cured than they rise and minister to Christ. There is no time of convalescence. Others, again, like Dr. Simpson, seem to stand out as witnesses to the reality of what is called "sudden conversions," when, in fact, the change is related by many subtle links to much past experience in the work, word, and ways of God. Of course, the advent of the higher life must ever, in one sense, be sudden; but this is quite consistent with its gradual manifestation to the believer's own soul.

The truth was, that the view he had now got of Christ suddenly vivified knowledge long held about God, and made it potential. He now knew Him in the highest sense as a Person who had loved him from the beginning. He who had before been only a name on the lips of others had become to him, and for him, a living Person, and the very life of his own heart. The fruit was in reality as wonderful as he felt it to be. Yet something analogous to this is constantly occurring in daily life. Who has not felt some look or word, or the discovery by some unexpected incident of a man's secret but persistent and influential interest in our behalf, change in a moment all our views regarding him? Before, he was nothing to us, or, it may be, was regarded with suspicion by us. Now,

he has become dear—one for whom we are willing to work, or suffer, if need be. True, it may be the truest friend among friends. In such circumstances the feeling uppermost is one of wonder that we did not know him and love him sooner. It was thus with Simpson. "How strange I did not see all this before!" And the wonder was increased when he saw that God now approached him at so many points. Every one of the gifts of his many-sided individuality was accepted, and shown to be fitted to reflect God's image, as each compartment in the facetted mirror reflected his own likeness.

Even before he had a clear view of the glory of Christ and of his own interest in Him, he said, "My speculative doubts have passed away." He had stood in the heart of what is called "phases of independent thought," an expression more imposing in sound than in sense. If it be meant by this that the authority of the Word of God is to be put in abeyance till a man has argued himself into belief, there is ground to fear he will not likely fall back on the Word again, and good reason to believe that, were he to do so, he would put his own notions in opposition to the "Thus saith the Lord." To claim the privilege of independent thought is too often the apology for want of faith. But the Scripture says "Believe," and then asks: "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" Dr. Simpson heard both words. Yielding to the one, he became the possessor of a new life; and resting on the other, the intelligent agent in a new course of living. In cases where speculative doubts still work damage, neither aspect of truth has been humbly and sincerely received. To some it may seem mysticism to allege there can be no Christian life and no Christian work without faith. But has not this also its analogy even in the case of every scientific worker? The faith, indeed, is exercised in another sphere, and on a different object, and the work of faith leads to different results, but the mere mental quality is in both cases the same. It is, no doubt, the fashion in some quarters to ignore this, and

to work as if there were neither wisdom nor order in creation, until man impresses the stamp of his own individuality on it. It will, however, be generally acknowledged that, but for the introduction of the belief in creative adaptation into the study of systematic zoology, natural history would to-day have been only what it was in the days of Bacon, a crude collection of "fables, antiquities, quotations, frivolous disputes, philology, ornaments, and table-talk." Suppose, for example, that we look at the corresponding parts in the details of structure in a bird and in a fish. How are we to account for correspondences, down to the most minute peculiarities, between animals so widely unlike in form, habit, and in the medium in which they live? The belief in creative modifications of Divine plan comes to be to the student both the position of rest and the point of view of study. But what would be thought of a worker who, while forced to recognise the adaptation, refused to believe in the Creator, merely because this brought him to entertain what confessedly is above reason, though not contrary to it? And if a man comes to see and to feel the adaptation of the gospel of Jesus Christ to his spiritual wants, and to have the witness to this in himself, is it not extreme folly to speak of his belief in Christ Himself as irrational or fanatical? There is a point at which both the anxious inquirer after spiritual peace and good hope, and the scientific worker, is brought to a stand. Philosophy, reason, understanding, can take him no further, and yet further he must go if rest is to come to the one, and successful work to be done by the other. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." Faith answers these questions, and our nature attains to its highest gratification—"Whom having not seen ye love. In whom, though ye see Him not, yet believing ye rejoice."

No sooner had Dr. Simpson's views of life been thus

changed than he was led into public work in Christ's service. Perhaps too soon. He himself felt unprepared for it, and one of the first expressions he used when work was presented to him was, "Paul got three years in Arabia before he gave himself to apostolic work." While the Church can ill afford to lose the warmth, freshness, and, shall I say, unreasoning zeal of her converts' first love, these might oftener be directed into channels less dangerous to young Christians themselves, and less hazardous to the truth, than addresses at crowded public meetings so often are. In many cases the Scriptural way is reversed. It is not "Come and hear, all ye that fear God," but "All ye that do not 'fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.'" When the true way is followed, the babe in grace has the advantage of that warm temperature, and of all these household surroundings so much needed when we start on our Christian life. When the other path is chosen, there is ever a temptation to speak beyond experience, to yield, unwittingly, to the growth of feelings that are not those of meekness and humility, or, while being satisfied above all telling, to forget that we will continue so only by hungering and thirsting.

> "Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
> If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
> May toss him to my breast."

Besides, it is far too often forgotten that in conversion there is no miraculous gift of knowledge of the Word of God imparted. This is attained only by painful and persistent application to the study of the Scriptures, comparing one passage with another, and letting the Bible become its own interpreter. Forgetfulness or neglect of this almost always leads to expressions of contempt for theology. And this is quite natural, because the ability to formulate scattered truths, and to deduce doctrine from a variety of texts, implies meditation, study, gifted intelligence, and a wide knowledge of Scripture. Yet God's words never assume their highest aspects of influence till they are thus dealt with. But the humblest Christian is every day

rendering them into this form by his study of the Word. Such views, moreover, lead men very naturally to hold the symbolic books of a Church of small value, or even, perhaps, as hindrances in the way of a soul's approach to God. They will not condescend to look at them. And when circumstances arise which compel them to do so, they approach them in the wrong way. Having become theologians without labour, they form a Christian system according to their own ideal, always a most defective one. And should confession or creed be found contrary to this, it is apt to be denounced as unscriptural, and a yoke not to be borne. Whereas, had they approached these in the only legitimate way, they might have discovered that the difficulties are not in the creed or confession, but in the Word of God itself. In almost every other department we follow a different method. We seek out and study the special facts, in order to see whether or no they warrant the generalizations. But to condemn the inference because we do not like it, before we have carefully studied the facts, always puts one in mind of an answer given before a question is asked. "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him." Dr. Simpson's habits of thought were not likely to expose him to this temptation. But when we remember how little attention he had given to the study of the Scriptures, before he experienced that change to which we have referred, we will see that it was almost impossible, when he began at once to do public Christian work, to escape some of these tendencies. Indeed, it is marvellous that he did not yield to more. His growth in spiritual attainments was very rapid. This might have been expected from what we know of his powers of memory and mental application. The private reading of the Bible, and its daily use in household worship, joined to the increased regularity of his attendance at Church, brought to him in a few months more accurate knowledge of the Word of God than they could have done, in the course of several years, to one of smaller attainments and feebler capacity.

TO A PATIENT.

"52 Queen Street, Edinburgh, *4th Feb.* 1862.

"My dear Madam,—How can I thank Mr. —— and you for the magnificent present? The story connected with one of the texts to be engraved on the watch, is too deeply impressed on my heart to be ever for one moment forgotten. I shall engrave it also on the watch I have been lately wearing, as I hand it over to my son for his use. The other text, 'God is Love,' has kept me thinking for the last twenty-four hours, and the more I think of it, the more wondrous and marvellous and comprehensive it grows. In some of our clear northern nights, the heavens above sparkle with countless numbers of bright and beautiful stars. The pages of the Bible sparkle with countless numbers of bright and beautiful texts. But I fancy that for the future I shall deem the text 'God *is* Love' as the greatest and grandest in the great and grand firmament of texts—a kind of pole-star around which, as around the pole-star in our heavens, the other starry messengers and sayings of the Bible revolve. And whenever I stand by the bedside of a weak and dying patient, and count her pulse, your selected text will, I trust, enable me to speak words of strength to her in her weakness, and words of life to her in the hour of her bodily death.—Ever yours, J. Y. Simpson."

Soon after his change an event occurred which gave bold relief to his new views of himself and of his life. His fifth child and third son, James, died on the 16th February 1862. James had from childhood been afflicted with an aggravated form of skin disease. As the invalid of the household for nearly fifteen years, much loving care and tender anxiety were lavished on him. As he seldom appeared in the presence of strangers, comparatively few were aware of his existence. But those who looked in on Dr. Simpson about four o'clock, or who were guests at the quiet family dinner, soon learned to love "Jamie" tenderly and heartily. His ever questioning intelligence, his vivacity, and the intense pleasure with which he

entered into any amusement, even when the sore disease seemed consuming his flesh, constrained one to thank God that he had planted so much natural capacity of joy in a heart where this gift of gladness was greatly needed.

TO HIS BROTHER.

"*Sunday afternoon, 16th February.*

"My dear Sandy,—It pleased God to take Jamie to Himself this morning. He died most calmly and peacefully, just before the church-bells began to ring. I gave him over into the arms of Christ, in the full faith that he was utterly safe in His keeping, and that after all, though here we all loved him dearly, God loved and loves him still more, infinitely more." Then he turns to another matter: "I hope you did not think me ridiculously silly and nervous on Friday. But please remember, as some excuse, that I was still very weak in body, and very, very heartsore. . . . In all cases how much must we trust to the love and arm of Jesus Christ . . . My kindest love to Mennie and David, not forgetting Arthur and Mary. My dear wife keeps wonderfully well. I am greatly obliged to Janet for coming in.—Yours ever affectionately,

"J. Y. S."

TO AN INTIMATE FRIEND IN LONDON.

"Edinburgh, 19*th Feby.* 1862.

"My dear Sister, and Jamie's kind Friend,—Many kindest thanks for your kind note to Jessie. Alick tells me also you have written him. But as Jessie is very busy this forenoon, and Alick is out visiting, and I am a kind of invalid at home, having had a bad sore throat, which has laid me off work for two or three weeks, I write in answer to your affectionate inquiries about my dear Jamie. . . .

"He had a most kind French 'bonne' taking care of him, and trying to teach him to speak French; and my assistant, Dr. Berryman, and he were great companions. He taught him latterly turning and carpentering, for though half blind he

worked away wonderfully and greatly by touch, making boxes, desks, cages, etc., for his little brothers and sisters. He had the garret room over my bedroom fitted up as a workshop; and as I was laid up lately with this sore throat, the knock of his busy little hammer, and the birr of his turning-lathe were somehow pleasant sounds. They are all silent and still there now, and I listen for them in vain. . . .

"He died most calmly and peacefully on Sunday morning; and just as he breathed his last breath the church-bells began to ring. Excuse us, my dear, dear sister, if in all our hearts here we fancied and felt that they were ringing Jamie into that eternal Sabbath of joy which is in heaven.

"And I have—we all here have—every reason to believe and trust that it is even so, that the kind and gracious arm of Christ did indeed, truly and lovingly, shield and protect him, as he walked through the dark, dark vale of death; and that Jamie is now with *Him* in that happy land, where there are no more tears, and no more sufferings and sorrows.

"Perhaps I would *stop* here, if to-day I were writing to any one else; but at the risk of even my sister thinking me stupid, and garrulous, I feel somehow impelled to tell her (who has always taken such an interest in me and mine) *why* I think so, *why* rather we all think so.

"Jamie became a changed boy for many months before he died, and perhaps he was one of the great means (let me *whisper* this in your ear)—for God has raised up others—why my whole household has seemed to change too. He was led (*how*, I will tell you, if we ever meet again) to see that time was a transitory moment indeed as compared with the eternity of eternity, and at last placed *such* faith (faith so simple, and full, and pure) in the certainty of salvation through the atoning blood of Christ, that for a length of time he was able to look forward to death utterly without fear. I have got here the favourite hymn which he used to hum in the workshop, play-room, etc. Will your dear husband and you bear with me if

I paste it on ; and perhaps you *will* kindly read and sing it for Jamie's sake.[1]

"I almost, as I read it, fancy that even your husband's grand big heart will not despise my weak one for believing—as I most sincerely do—that my dear boy *has* found truly his 'palm,' his 'harp,' his 'crown,' his 'mansion,' his 'friends in the promised land of his Saviour and Father.'"

Then he relates the incidents of Jamie's death, and continues :—

"My house at present is a so-called house of mourning; but it is also, in the truest sense of *that* word, a house of joy. My sister would perhaps have thought so, if at this night's prayers (for though I began the letter this morning I was interrupted, and only finish it now—half-past ten) she had heard my whole household and servants earnestly singing Jamie's hymn, to which Davie added the verse—

'I have a *brother* in the promised land.' . . .

"But I am tired out, and I fear greatly I tire you. But believe me always your loving brother, J. Y. SIMPSON.

"*P.S.*—To-morrow we lay in the grave the *body* of our dear Jamie, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust. The tombstone at the head of his grave was many years ago inscribed with this text : 'Nevertheless I live.'"

In a postscript to a note written to Miss Barbour—"Margot"—two days after Jamie's death, he says :—"It seems to me and, I think, to all of us here, that we have somehow a greater interest in Christ's kingdom, seeing that my dear Jamie is already there as one of His joyous children."

[1] "I have a Father in the promised land,
I have a Father in the promised land,
When my Lord calls then I must go
To meet Him in the promised land.
Away and away to the promised land!" . . .

TO DR. DUNS.

"My dear Duns,—I allowed you to go away last night without saying what I intended to say, that my dear little Jamie is to be interred on Thursday at two o'clock. There are none to be present but relations, and five or six who were Jamie's friends in this life. It would give Mrs. Simpson very great satisfaction if, as one of these last, you would accompany his remains to the grave. But, of course, if you have any other engagements that afternoon, never think of this request. We know and feel that you loved him, and you must not allow our wishes to stand in the way of other duty.

"It was very kind of you indeed to call last night. Mine is a house of grief just now; but, thanks to God, it is also a house of joy. I can say from my heart of hearts, all of us here, I hope, can say, it was indeed WELL for us to be afflicted. God's love to me and mine has been truly something transcendent. . . . Yours always, J. Y. Simpson.

"18*th Feby.* 1862."

On the visit referred to in this note, I found Dr. and Mrs. Simpson alone in the drawing-room. In a short time his valued friend Mr. Brodie, the sculptor, joined us. The conversation turned on the uses of affliction, and on the way in which the Spirit of God shows them to men. The modes of approach to the afflicted by "God who comforteth" were noticed. Then the talk drifted into remarks about preaching.

I was greatly struck with his clear views of truth, and the child-like simplicity of his trust in Christ.

TO MRS. STEWART, FREE CHURCH MANSE, KILLIN.

"52 Queen Street, 24*th Feby.* 1862.

"My dear Mrs. Stewart,—God has been pleased to afflict us, but we can all, I hope, say from our heart of hearts that it was well we were afflicted. In one of the last debates which the children had in the nursery, just a fortnight before Jamie

left us, there was a difference of opinion as to whether little, wee folks like they—now that God had shown *them* His infinite love—should speak of Christ to their companions. Jamie decided it all at last to them by the declaration, 'We must speak for Jesus,' 'for it is (he summed up) a glorious thing to do so.' Ten days afterwards God suddenly summoned him away from earth to heaven. One of the last prayers—the last which Jamie prayed—was a prayer, that Christ would touch Davie's heart and take him to Himself. It was marvellously answered the day after Jamie died. I have sometimes thought of writing you, to tell you how of late the love of God to me and mine has been perfectly transcendent. Christ seems to have taken one and all of my family to Himself for the children of His kingdom. You gave me *such* good, kind advice last year about family prayers. Alick, who has been one great instrument in God's hands in bringing us all into the fold of Christ, Alick, I say, and I, sometimes wish you were here to see how heartily now we join in these prayers. The world seems quite, quite changed. 'All old things now are passed away.'

"I have written this hurried note, because I know that the good news will rejoice the hearts of two kind friends in the manse of Killin. And I know, too, that Mr. Stewart and you will earnestly pray to Christ to keep the feet of all of us *firmly* fixed on the Rock of Ages.

"I have been sick and ill for three weeks, but have been lecturing again on Friday and to-day. As yet I am not quite strong, and would be much the better of two days of good air at Killin or elsewhere, but it is impossible to get away.

"Now, pray do not think I write excitedly. No, no. 'I am not mad, most noble Festus.' But I find it difficult or impossible to write even to you at all adequately of the unspeakable goodness and love of God to all in 52 Queen Street.

"I was asked on Saturday to address the next religious monthly meeting of the medical students. At first I thought *that* was impossible; but then the commission of Jamie, 'We

must speak for Jesus,' came rapping at the door of my heart, and with God's gracious help I am to do it. Kindest love to Mr. Stewart.—Yours for ever, J. Y. SIMPSON."

Dr. Simpson was now bringing his gift to the altar. But he remembered the exhortation—"Go first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Among the earliest acts of his new life was a complete reconciliation with his former friend, Professor Miller, in circumstances and in a manner worthy of both.

The grass had not begun to grow on Jamie's grave before his father began to "speak for Jesus." Being called on the 6th March to preside at the last meeting of a series that had been held in Queen Street Hall, Edinburgh, for "Special Religious Services," he delivered an address, characterized by great earnestness and simplicity :—

"I am requested to mention now, what I believe most of you are already aware of, that this is the last of the present series of meetings for special religious services. . . . What I have heard leads me to feel and believe that three classes of people have profited from these meetings. First, that those who already had believed in Christ have had their hearts refreshed, and their spirits stirred up to speak more for Jesus, and have been quickened to greater ardour in seeking the good of others. Then also many who were already seeking the way of life—good, earnest, anxious souls, but who had gathered round themselves certain mists and clouds which kept them in darkness, have had these mists cleared away and these doubts dispelled, and are now seeing clearly and nearly Christ as their Saviour. Again, we believe that these meetings have had the good fortune, by the accompanying blessing from on high, to arrest and arouse some who came here out of curiosity, but who now have either found rest to their souls or are seeking that rest in salvation through Christ. And in reference to such careless souls as are still living regardless of the future, may we not ask, Is it not one

of the astounding things to be seen around us, that men, actively engaged in the pursuits of this life, and neglecting nothing which can secure success in these pursuits, should yet be found so entirely to forget to make their peace with God! . . ."

On the 20th of the same month he addressed the medical students, convened by request of the Committee of the Medical Missionary Society. "I feel," he said, "as if it were scarcely fitting that I should stand up to speak upon the subject on which I am expected to address you,—I, who am one of the oldest sinners and one of the youngest believers in the room. When I got a note requesting me to do so, I was in a sick-bed, ill of fever, and I at once said 'I cannot do this.' But when I came to reflect further, I felt I must do it. . . . I cannot speak earnestly, or as I ought *for* Jesus, but let me try to speak a little *of* Him—His matchless love, His great redemption which He offers to you and me.

"Some of you perhaps have read many novels and dramas, and been interested and amused by them. But here, in the Word of God, is a more terrible, a more touching story than the mind of man ever created,—a story as far above all these as the heavens are above the earth, and differing from all these in this—it is every word true. In those the characters are limited, but this takes in all mankind. Those stories have reference to the few days or years when they happened, but the interest of this is limited to no time, it stretches on to all eternity. Let me speak to you of one or two points in this great drama of the destiny of man.

"1*st*. Man was created holy, but man has fallen. Which of God's commandments have we not broken? and the breaking of one of them is sin. Think of the two great commandments, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, and thy neighbour as thyself.' Has any one of us kept these two commandments? Which of them are we not all daily, hourly breaking? When we think that God requires the spiritual keeping of them, as well as

keeping them in our deeds, have we not broken them every one? An unnecessary angry thought is sin—an unchaste thought is sin—a covetous thought is sin—every idle word is a sin. How many then are our sins! God not only knows every action, but he reads every thought of our hearts.

"2*d*. Then think, as it were, of a second act in this drama, if we acknowledge the fact of our sins, let us remember that in the sight of God, our sins deserve *death*. Cursed is every one continuing not in all things written in the Book of the Law to do them. Some men raise questions as to whether this is right, that sin should be punished with death. What right have we to question God? We know, as medical men, the perfect adaptation of the physical frame to perform its various functions. What right have we to judge God, if the interference with these, as we see, causes death, and we see that God has ordered that sin unforgiven ends in the death of the soul? And in this we have no more right to judge God than a fly upon that wall would have to judge the architect by whom this house was framed. The wages of sin is *death*. Not the death of the body only but the death of the soul. Whatever brought that curse upon ourselves, how is it to be avoided? By God sending His own beloved Son into the world to die for us.

"3*d*. There is another act in this drama of human destiny. Christ, the second person in the Godhead, who was with the Father before the foundation of the world, becoming a poor child, exposed to poverty and danger, going hungering over this earth, tempted, and having nowhere to lay his head. Think how He showed His humanity, showed how mortal He was as well as how divine—by the mortal terror—the horror which came over him in His agony. Look at the terrible submissiveness, the appalling passiveness, with which He allows Himself to be scourged, beaten, nailed to the cross—think of His dying in darkness for your sake and mine, when He cried, 'My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?' He died that you and I might live.

"*4th.* A fourth act remains—not finished, like the rest, but one which is still going on. This story differs from all others in this, that you and I are not merely spectators: we are actors ourselves. Your fate for ever is involved in the part you take in this scene. You are permitted to dwell upon earth that you may avail yourselves of this great redemption, that you may turn and believe to the saving of your souls. . . . Physiologists have reckoned how often the heart beats in a lifetime, from the first moment in birth till the last in death. Every beat is bringing that eternity nearer. Since we came into this room, our hearts have beat some four or five thousand times, so many times less than they shall ever beat again. . . . You know in your profession, how a dying man will cling to the hope of life. If cancer has seized him, what will he not do to be freed from that disease? He would submit to any operation, he would take any medicine, what would he not give if his life could be spared and his health restored? And all for what? To allow that body to enjoy the pleasures of this world at most a few years longer. *Sin* is the cancer of the soul, yet how few there are who try even to obtain a cure! How few seek to have their souls delivered from sin! There is one remedy, a remedy all potent, salvation to the uttermost—in the death, in the blood of Jesus. . . . Let us seek the Holy Spirit to help and enable us, but the remedy is *the blood of Christ*, believing the record that God hath given us of His Son. . . .

"Many kind friends are trying to awaken you to the momentous importance of these things, and calling upon you to believe in Christ. If any of these, or anything you have heard here, has stirred you up, do not, I beseech you, put aside your anxiety. Follow it up. Follow it out. If in your own lodgings, in the dark watches of the night, you are troubled with a thought about your soul, if you hear some one knocking at your heart, listen. It is He who said, 1800 years ago, upon the sea of Galilee, 'It is I, be not afraid.' Open the door of your heart. Say to Him, come in. In Christ you will find a

Saviour, a companion, a counsellor, a friend, a brother, who loves you with a love greater than human heart can conceive."

The reader will perceive the frequency with which Dr. Simpson refers to prayer, and to the attitude which implies prayer. He had early said,—"My speculative doubts have all passed away." These doubts had specially influenced him on the subject of prayer. I had frequent occasion to notice his familiarity with that most unscientific view of natural law, which represents the Almighty as dethroned by the forces He has Himself brought into action : and excluded from that right of control over the fruits of His own will and power, which we never deny to man over his. This view strikes at the very heart of Christianity. According to it, interference with the orderly action of natural laws for spiritual ends is not to be thought of. A miracle is held to be impossible. Yet very few who assume this attitude will be found ready to advocate the doctrine of the eternity of matter. But to be consistent they should. If they are forced to acknowledge creation by miracle, why should they deny the action of the same power at different stages of the earth's upbuilding? In spite of development, uniformitarianism, and other physical theories, there are hundreds of facts in geology which must continue hopeless puzzles, so long as we refuse to recognise creative interferences at different periods in the earth's history,—in a word, miracles. But more : those who have most faith in the persistent and independent action of natural law never scruple to assign a higher place to the law than to the matter through which and on which it acts. The latter is subordinated to the former. Why then should it be held incredible that the Creator of matter should have used it once and again, in a way that seems to us opposed to the law originally stamped on it, when He has in view the interests of His own Kingdom in the spiritual nature of man ? I refer to this to indicate the chief sphere in which Dr. Simpson's speculative doubts moved. Looking at the subject intellectually, he could not see how the practice of prayer could alter the settled

purpose of an unchanging God. But while this state of mind continues, prayer can have no meaning. Had he held such a view now, it is not the least likely he would have ever prayed himself, or urged prayer upon others as a duty and a privilege. A complete change had taken place. Speculative doubts are influential so long as we hold reason to be our only guide, and refuse to allow anything to wield moral power over us which we do not understand, or which we cannot sharply define. But with the Christian it is different. He is a believer. A higher faculty, faith, comes into play. He is called to trust where reason cannot help him. It is his privilege to believe where he cannot fully understand. Any attempts to test the experiences of the life of faith by the methods of science must end in failure. Dr. Simpson at once saw that, as a child of God, he was called on to hold towards God a bearing having some analogy to that which his own children held towards himself. Daily he might demand their aid, or the exercise of their highest powers in what they did not understand. If they loved him, his word would be enough. They required no other motive. As children, they had no right to ask for any other explanation than what came to them in the statement of their father's will. Now God's will is—"In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make your requests known." This is enough. It is made on the ground of love and trust. But if we leave this ground, and demand a clear intellectual discernment of the harmony between eternal divine purpose and prevailing prayer, we virtually leave the Father's household. We no longer trust as children. We seek a knowledge necessarily beyond our reach, and we lose the blessing which He has put to our hand. Thoughtful men exercised by these difficulties have, no doubt, strong claims on the tenderness and forbearance of the Church, but it should not be forgotten that the only point of rest is the position in which Dr. Simpson found it—faith.

Dr. Simpson sometimes presided at the meeting of the

Carrubber's Close Mission,[1] in the Free Church Assembly Hall, where, on the Sabbath night, for many years, an audience, numbering about two thousand, has regularly met to listen to the Word of God. On one of these occasions he delivered a stirring address on the words "Dead in trespasses and sins," which was afterwards published as a tract by the London Tract Society. While his conversation on religious topics was marked by a like earnest tone and thoughtful seriousness, he was more frank and genial than before, even when dissenting from the opinions of others. At lunch a lady had spoken rather warmly in favour of certain ritualistic practices in vogue under a clergyman whose name happened to be mentioned when Dr. Simpson was earnestly engaged talking to a gentleman, and did not seem to hear her. But when a pause occurred, he remarked—"I don't see how lighting candles in sunlight can help souls to heaven. Besides, Christ is the Light of the world and the Light of Life. We don't want candles in our Scotch churches. We have, I hope, the Sun of Righteousness. Church tinsel and glitter won't do for people who are hungry. They ask for bread." "And can't even get a stone," said a stranger who had hitherto been silent. A hearty laugh put an end to the controversy.

TO MRS. BARBOUR.

"*12th Sept.* 1862.

"My dear Mrs. Barbour,—I am sure that Jessie will agree with me in rejoicing that more use for Christ's cause should be made of your beautiful poem about Jamie. The abridgement is capitally done. To-day I saw Mr. Brodie's medallion of Jamie in marble, and it seems very good indeed. I have a patient who, with her husband, drove a long distance two Sundays ago and heard Mrs. Thistlethwaite. She says the address was very good, but so very long (two hours) as to tire

[1] Begun by Mr. Gall in Whitfield Chapel, Carrubber's Close, High Street, 1858. Worked under the care of Messrs. Gall and Jenkinson till 1869, at which date Mr. Jenkinson became general superintendent.

out many. . . . I hope that you are all thriving and getting stronger and stronger at Bonskeid. On Saturday night I am going down (*D. V.*) to Erskine to spend the Sunday with Lord and Lady Blantyre there. I wish greatly to do so, as Lady B. and I will, I trust, have a long, long talk. There came here to lunch to-day an old Irish patient whom I have not seen for years. She told me so nicely and quietly that she was *so* changed since I saw her, and was now a Plymouth 'brother.' Genders are forgotten apparently in their creed!

"I am living here, in 52 Queen Street, at present just like Robinson Crusoe, 'monarch of all I survey'; and as the house was *not* large enough, I went down and slept at Viewbank last night—perhaps to escape the bell. Little Jessie's dog seemed pleased to see me, and slept all night on my stockings spread out as a bed for it on my bed-room floor. Kindest regards to Mr. Barbour, Lady Margot, and all the little ones. J. Y. S."

"52 Queen Street, *Christmas Day* 1862.

"My dear Mrs. Barbour,—Jessie and I beg your kind acceptance of the accompanying inkstand as a slight memento of our deep love and gratitude to you and yours. That the ink which it will contain may write a tale as touching as that of our dear, dear Jamie, and many an appeal for the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ as thrilling as 'The Soul Gatherer,' is the sincere prayer of yours ever,

"J. Y. Simpson."

CHAPTER XIII.

Influence of Religious Convictions on public work—Lecture at Falkirk on "Ancient Camelon"—"Small Squabbles"—Work among Patients—Earnest work—Aiming to be first—Correspondence with archæologists—Archæological Rambles—Fife Caves—Professor Syme and Acupressure—Death of his brother David—Illness—Baronetcy—Armorial Bearings—Sorrow—Death of Dr. David Simpson—Death of Jessie—Degree of D.C.L.—Oxon—Letter from Rev. Dr. Blaikie—Antiquity of Man—Illness—Switzerland—Hymn—Visits to Ireland—Social Science Address—Archæology—Archaic Sculpturings—Archæology and Geology—Prehistoric Fauna—Methods of Research.

WHAT influence had the change described in the previous chapter on Dr. Simpson's work? A notion is current, that earnest religious convictions and deep religious feeling indispose men for what are called secular pursuits. The folly of this impression has seldom been better illustrated than in his case. Not only did he give himself with all his former enthusiasm to the duties of his profession, but science also, and chiefly archæological studies, had as great a charm for him as ever. Whatever enlarged the boundaries of human knowledge, or increased the comfort and happiness of man, had his sympathy, and, as occasion offered, was sure of his help. The cause of man was ever to him the cause of God. Thus, while to the departments in which he had formerly worked there was now added that of religious effort, he wrote more carefully in the literature of Archæology, and investigated more deeply than he had done previously. In the autumn of 1862, while yet under all the warmth and zeal of "first love," he delivered the opening

address at the Falkirk School of Arts. His subject was "Ancient Camelon, the Wall of Pius Antoninus, and the effects of the Roman Residence in Britain on its Civilisation." The meeting was crowded. Many were attracted by the report of the great change that had been wrought on him. "I wished to see," one said, "how he looked as a Christian," and expressed something between satisfaction and disappointment on discovering that "he was Simpson still." The opening sentence of the address showed that the deep and searching spiritual work of the year had made no break in his relation to his past studies as an antiquary. "Many years ago, when I lived here as assistant-surgeon to Dr. Girdwood, I had a love of archæology, and made some acquaintance with the vestiges and remains of the Roman invasion in the neighbourhood."

In the beginning of 1863 he prepared for publication his "Notes on some Scottish Magical Charm-Stones." This paper was originally read at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries in April 1861. It contains much curious information on magical charms and curing stones.[1]

I have found very few traces among Dr. Simpson's papers, bearing dates from November 1861 to May 1864, of what he had come to call "small squabbles." When they did turn up he dismissed them with the remark, "I have no time for this," or, "I forgive him," or, as to Dr. B., "Do not let such reports annoy you too much. If we medical men listened to all the calumnies and slanders of our enemies our lives would be miserable. Do let us do our duty to the best of our abilities, and the public will ultimately defend us."

There are records in abundance of his professional work, and many evidences of the influence of new and higher views in dealing with patients. The following communication from the Rev. W. Blair, Leighton Manse, Dunblane, well illustrates this :—

"On the 19th Oct. 1863 I called at the house of Professor

[1] See *Archæological Essays*, vol. i.

Simpson in Queen Street, in order to consult him respecting the health of my eldest child, a boy of four years old. As the Professor was at lunch, I was shown into the library, where I remained about two hours,—so many persons like myself being occupied with the good physician. At length Professor S. came in, and took me aside to a recess in the window. I described the symptoms of my child's illness, when he looked sympathizingly at me and said, 'Is it not ——?' I had heard the name of the disease before, but was unaware of its real nature. Professor S. went to a shelf and took down a volume and said, 'Read that over, and see if it is at all like the case of your boy.' He then left me to attend to some one else, and was absent for a long time. . . .

"In the afternoon I received a telegram from Dr. S., stating that he had left Edinburgh at four o'clock, and asking me to meet him at the station. On coming into the room where our dear boy was, he sat down on the sofa beside him, got out his medical watch, which struck the hours like a clock, and showed it to him, and in the most winning way conversed with the child, telling him amusing stories and endeavouring to lighten the load of anxiety that lay on all our hearts. Among other curiosities shown to the child was a silver medicine-case like a snuff-box, a present from a son of the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw. He took a carte as a remembrance of our boy; and after tea, and giving us all instructions as to treatment, he bade us good-bye, and left by a cab to return with the mail to Edinburgh. . . .

"It was on Tuesday Professor S. visited us. Our child sank rapidly as the week hastened on. On Sabbath morning, the day our boy died, I had a medical volume sent by Professor S., along with this note:—

"'My dear Sir,—I am sorry, very sorry, to learn that my little friend is so much weaker. After looking at various statements about the use of water, and talking it over with medical friends, I have come round to the conclusion that such

a strong instinct should not be withstood. For after all water can have no chemical influence in the formation of sugar. I would therefore be inclined to advise a far freer use of water in any form. I have sent you the best recent work on the disease. . . . J. Y. S.'

"About a month after this I sent a letter of thanks to Professor S., enclosing a bank cheque for a few pounds as a small expression of gratitude. To this I received the following reply:—

"'52 Queen Street, Edinburgh, *3d December* /63.

"'My dear Sir,—Many kindest thanks for the fee which you have sent me. But you must be so good as allow me to return it, as (with many others of my professional brethren) I do not think it right to take any professional remuneration from clergymen or their families. Give me your prayers, and I will value them far more.

"'Give my kindest respects to Mrs. Blair, and say to her how deeply I did sympathize with her and you in the loss of such a very dear child. "Loss"! to you; but happily gain and glory to him.—Yours always, J. Y. Simpson.'"

Dr. Simpson's activity of heart, hand, and mind during this period could not well have been surpassed, if equalled, by any other worker. When asked to preside at religious meetings in Edinburgh, to speak to the people of his native town on the blessings of Christ's salvation, to address the Newhaven fishermen on the same apparently absorbing theme, or to tell the story of the Cross in the drawing-rooms of the rich, he was ever willing and ready. Then he wrote letters innumerable on Archæological matters, and on Acupressure a bulky treatise which he was preparing for publication. His step seemed quicker, his eye brighter, his laugh more joyous, his heart lighter than ever before. His very sicknesses and trials had the sting taken out of them, by Him to whom he had learned to look as the bearer both of guilt and of grief. But he was

still aiming in all things to be first. Even in religious work this was apparent, and there was no abatement of the desire in other pursuits. "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Earnest himself, he wished to see earnestness in all others. "We had a minister yesterday—a good man no doubt—but oh, *cauld, cauld.* Why *will* not men speak as if they believed what they said, and wished others to believe it? Just look at Guthrie—what zeal and fire!" Then as to another—"Yes, a good man, but his sermon was *wersh, wersh.*"[1] No one could complain of him in this respect, either in purely professional matters or in studies lying outside of these. His short brief epistolary notes carried with them a kind of inoculative force, which brought others into his own track and rate of progress. Here is one out of many such:—"My dear Jessie,—Please send out clean shirt, etc., and my letters. Send out Davie and Dr. Black by the carriage at ten. Charlie has had a hard fight for life all night, and is very ill. Have never been in bed, and am very tired. Send the enclosed telegram to Glasgow.—Yours lovingly, J. Y. S. 7 *o'clock* A.M." "Got your brief note," writes an antiquary, "and will at once search as you suggest." Such notes brought speedy answers from foremost antiquaries full of information, and, let me add, in some cases full of questions also, many of them interesting and important. Dr. Joseph Robertson, Dr. John Stuart, Dr. Reeves, Dr. J. Collingwood Bruce, Sir W. Wilde, and other eminent archæologists, were all equally ready to answer queries, which they of all men were best fitted to do, by advantages of position, work, and special studies. It is impossible to understand how he found time for the amount of study implied in putting his queries, and, when they were answered, in verifying references himself. This he was ever in the habit of doing, a labour which often bore rich fruit, by making known to him facts which his fellow-workers had not noticed.

His skill in eliciting information from all who had anything

[1] Tasteless.

to tell has already been noticed. This faculty was of great use in his archæological pursuits. Called to visit many different and often distant localities professionally, he never failed to make inquiries about their antiquities. The country squire, the farmer, the tradesman, the railway station-master, were all put under examination on the very topics they were best able to speak to. And often when his work with a patient was done, there was still an hour or more before he could set out on his homeward journey. This he pressed into the service of science, by driving to the ancient remains, of whose existence he had become aware during the visit. He occasionally snatched a day from a busy week, when fatigued by professional and literary work, and made it an archæological holiday. In these rambles he always persuaded two or three intimate friends to join him. As he took his seat in the train, the look of boy-like frolic, and the hearty "Now for a day of it," showed that he, at all events, was determined to enjoy the trip. Occasionally the day's doings led to a discovery, as in the case of "a run to Fife," in the summer of 1865, which led to a Paper entitled "Notices of some Ancient Sculptures on the Walls of Caves in Fife." This was read at a meeting of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, on the 2d January 1866. Having pointed out that the county of Fife abounds in caves, or "weems," the ancient Gaelic name for caves—that their existence gives a title to the Earldom of Wemyss, he stated that he had visited some of these with Dr. Dewar when on a professional visit to Fife, and continued :—"This induced him to return, accompanied by his friends, Drs. Joseph Robertson, Duns, and Paterson, when they visited two or three new caves, and found their walls sculptured with representations of various animals and emblems. These cave sculpturings were of great interest to the Scotch archæologist, for this reason, that they exactly resembled, in type and character, the carvings on the so-called sculptured stones of Scotland. In his magnificent first volume on the sculptured stones of Scotland, Dr. Stuart had collected 150 examples, and since then perhaps 50 more had been discovered. These sculptured

stones extended along the whole east coast of Scotland, from the Forth northwards. Only two have been found south of the Forth. In general ornamentation they resemble the sculptured stones of the west of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and England; but the peculiarity of the Scotch stones is that they have additional figures and symbols upon them that have been seen nowhere else in the world. These peculiar and characteristic symbols consist of the so-called crescent ornament, sometimes intersected with the Z sceptre; of the so-called spectacle ornament, with or without the same sceptre; of figures of elephants, fish, serpents, mirrors, combs, and arches or tores. . . . There are eight or nine of these caves near Easter Wemyss, in which sculpturings abound, sometimes isolated, but often in groups." Throughout the day Dr. Simpson was in great glee. The discovery seemed to him the probable key to many archæological difficulties, but his chief delight was in imagining Dr. Stuart's astonishment, when he should read next morning in the Edinburgh newspapers a paragraph on the subject. "The cave men are going to speak at last. But what will Stuart say? Won't he open his eyes? Won't he regret he was not with us?"

Causes of controversy arise, offences come, which cannot be passed without playing false to what we conscientiously hold to be truth. Even an apostle had to say, "I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." The incident to which I am now to refer was, no doubt, the natural outcome of a previous state of feeling on the part of one of the actors. About the middle of February 1865, the following notice appeared in an Edinburgh newspaper:—"It is often stated that when the notorious surgical teacher Paracelsus wished to show his aversion to any particular author, he immolated the writing he dissented from in the presence of his pupils. We are not aware that this mediæval practice has ever been adopted in any of our Scottish Universities till last week, when it was followed out in one of the class-rooms of the University of Edinburgh." The circumstances are then narrated. Dr. Simp-

son's pamphlet on Acupressure, styled "Answers to Objections," is referred to, and the writer adds—"Last week Mr. Syme took this pamphlet into his class-room, and without attempting to answer the rather unanswerable arguments which it contains in favour of acupressure, he scolded at the author, and declared the pamphlet to be a piece of 'vulgar insolence.' We quote from the letter of an accurate eye-witness—'Then came the dénouement; with firm hand, teeth compressed, pale lines around his orbits, and altogether a most determined and savage expression, he tore the pamphlet in two, gave the fragments to his assistant to be consigned to the sawdust box with other surgical remains.'" Mr. Syme replied to this paragraph in the *Lancet* on the 4th March, complained of Dr. Simpson's use of the term "foolish," applied to one of his objections, and justified the act, alleging that in tearing the pamphlet he gave to it "the only reply it deserved." Dr. Simpson's answer dealt chiefly with the merits of his discovery. But before concluding, he characterized the apology for the act and the act itself. "I applied the term ('foolish') to one of his so-called objections, because, logically and rationally, it was not an objection, in any sense of the word, to acupressure, and had no kind of relation whatever to acupressure. Virtually it was no more an 'objection against acupressure,' than it was an objection against the litigation of the Breadalbane Peerage, or the fortification of Inchkeith. But I regret that I used any phrase that by any possibility could be misinterpreted, and I freely withdraw it, and empower Mr. Syme and my readers to substitute any milder adjective for it." As to the "tearing scene,"—"I appeal on this point from the opinion of Mr. Syme to the opinion of every gentleman belonging to our common profession, whether or not this was a proper piece of ethical instruction on the part of any teacher of youth, and particularly on the part of one, as Mr. Syme is, of the twenty-four venerable members of the 'Council of Medical Education in the United Kingdom.'" The correspondence was, after a break, resumed by Mr. Syme in

November, and continued till January 1866. It was necessary to allude to it, because an impression prevailed in some quarters, and still prevails, that Dr. Simpson was the aggressor on this occasion. But this is not the case. In fact the terms in which he refers to Mr. Ferguson's objections—"fancies"—will appear to most as severe as those used in speaking of Mr. Syme. Yet Ferguson wrote a most hearty note to him after the scene in the surgical class-room.

During the break in the controversy Dr. Simpson's thoughts were very differently exercised :—

"52 Queen St., Edinburgh, 11*th July* 1865.

"My dear Sandy,—I suppose you will have a letter announcing—like the enclosed—the sudden death of Davie at Hamilton. The letter is very nicely written, and the statement in it regarding dear Davie's 'change of late,' and his long and earnest prayers, is the most interesting and consoling part of the whole. You and I are now the only two remnants of the older generation, and *our* summons wears rapidly on. By God's blessing I hope that both of us will be ready when it arrives, and be found looking with full assurance to the Lamb of God as *our* sacrifice.

"I have kept the documents of the certificate of death, etc., till you have time to come in.—Yours always,

"J. Y. Simpson."

In August he had another attack of illness. When convalescent he sought strength in a visit to the Isle of Man, leaving his son, Dr. David Simpson, in charge of his patients.

"52 Queen St., Edinburgh, *August* 22, 1865.

"My dear Father,—I suppose you got on to the Island yesterday. We heard of your having left for the boat, and not having returned, and therefore concluded you had got a passage.

"I send some letters to you, one envelope being archæological and the other commonplace. One letter I see is from Mrs. W., to which she wants an answer, but fortunately she has omitted

to put down her address, so an answer is luckily out of the question.

"There is also an illustrated paper from Copenhagen with a cut of a sculptured stone in it.

"Mrs. M. invited me along to the British Hotel about half-past two o'clock this morning. That was bad enough; but I was suddenly wakened again about seven by a joyous band of painters, who were whistling, singing, and shouting whilst engaged in the unromantic employment of washing and painting the stair-case. All the patients are very well.

"I hope you're getting a little rest, and enjoying yourself. Be sure you don't come back till the middle of next month at the soonest. *You're not needed here.* Give my love to Eve and Mag. My mother seems to be enjoying turning the house upside down and cleaning (?) it. It's uncommonly uncomfortable. All well.—Believe me, your affectionate son,

"D. SIMPSON."

He returned to his abundant labours much invigorated, and entered on the busy work of the winter with good heart.

The new year opened brightly, and full of promise. On its first week he received the following communication from Earl Russell:—

"OSBORNE, 3*d January* 1866.

"DEAR DR. SIMPSON,—Your professional merits, especially your introduction of chloroform, by which difficult operations in surgery have been rendered painless, and which has in many cases made that possible which would otherwise have been too hazardous to attempt, deserve some special recognition from the Crown.

"The Queen has been pleased to command me to offer you on these grounds the rank of Baronet.

"I trust it will be agreeable to you to accept the honour.—I remain, yours very truly, RUSSELL.

"Be so good as to direct your answer to Pembroke Lodge, Richmond, Surrey."

In an early number of the *London Gazette* the official notification appeared in due form :—"The Queen has been pleased to direct letters-patent to be passed under the Great Seal, granting the dignity of a Baronet of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland unto James Young Simpson, of Strathavon, in the county of Linlithgow, and of the city of Edinburgh, M.D., one of Her Majesty's Physicians in Scotland, and the heirs-male of his body lawfully begotten."

TO HIS BROTHER.

"*6th Jany.* /66.

"My dear Sandy,—I do not know whether you ought to condole with me or congratulate me. But most unexpectedly this morning I received from the Queen the offer of a Baronetcy,—Lord John Russell accompanying the offer with very complimentary observations. I fear that I must accept. But it appears to me *so* absurd to take a title. I have not spoken of it here yet. Do not mention it.—Yours always,

"J. Y. Simpson."

TO MRS. PENDER.

"*6th Jany.* /66.

"My dear Mrs. Pender,—Most unexpectedly I have got a communication from Lord John Russell offering me, by 'command of the Queen,' a Baronetcy; and all in very complimentary terms. Twice before I have avoided being Sir'd; but I feel shut up almost to accepting this offer. Yet it looks to me *so* absurd and ridiculous, that I dream again of how I can avoid it, and wish heartily it had not been proffered to me. I would that you had been near me to give me some of your wise counsel.—Yours very truly, J. Y. Simpson."

TO HIS SON WALTER.

"Edinburgh, *9th Jany.* /66.

"My own dear Wattie,—Last mail, when I sent you out the first part of a draft for £100, I had no time to write; but I hope it arrived safe, and when you want more you must be

sure and write me. I know well how easily money flies off in such a place as Alexandria, and I know that you will not throw it away unnecessarily. . . .

"Poor Davie has been very ill for some days, but is very decidedly better during the last fifty hours, and looks quite like himself to-night, though weak.

"Dear, dear Jessie becomes weaker and weaker, but is as gentle and good as ever—more gentle, and better.

"I do not know whether you have heard or not that, as a New Year's gift, I had a present sent me,—which, since it has become known, has set *all* Edinburgh apparently mad with joy and congratulations. I have shaken hands daily for two or three days, till my arm is weary and sore. And the proudest of all about the gift is your uncle at Bathgate. At all events, he is a thousand times prouder of it than I am. In fact, when the gift was first offered me I was rather ashamed to speak of it, and doubted about accepting it. But it was decided at last otherwise. Now the gift itself was right royal, and the donor the Queen herself. It was, in short, the offer of a Baronetcy; and I suppose I ought to esteem it greatly, as I am, it seems, the first Scottish Professor, as well as the first doctor *in* Scotland, who ever received that rank from the Crown. Besides, it is the rank of Baronet of the United Kingdom—not of a section of it, and ought, I am told, to be valued correspondingly. At all events the offer was made in such very kind and gracious terms that it was difficult to refuse. It will take two or three weeks yet to go through the Patent and Heraldry offices, yet everybody pokes at me their 'Sir,' which I would be glad to avoid. It seems to have caused much joy, not only in Edinburgh, but everywhere around. But my paper, and time, and subject are done.—Believe me, your loving father, J. Y. Simpson."

FROM JOHN PENDER, ESQ.

"*Jany.* 6, /66.

"My dear Friend,—I most heartily rejoice at the distinction conferred upon you by the Queen. No living man better

deserves it. May you long be spared to pursue the useful life and use the powerful mind which God has given you for the benefit of your fellow-creatures. I also sincerely hope that the honour now conferred upon the family will stimulate those that are to follow you, and that they will carry forward that which you have so well and nobly founded. Again let me assure you of the pleasure that I feel in the appreciation which the Queen has shown of your invaluable services. I shall write you again upon other matters.—I am sincerely yours,

"JOHN PENDER."

Mr. Pender's letter is a good specimen of the communications that reached him in great numbers, on the announcement of Her Majesty's gracious act. In a few days he received more than three hundred letters of congratulation, chiefly from members of the aristocracy, men of literature and science, and professional brethren. "I think all Edinburgh has been here," said Lady Simpson, "and they seem prouder of the honour than he is." The newspapers and the medical journals were equally alert in expressing their cordial satisfaction with the Queen's gift. "The conferring of this distinction," says the *Lancet*, "must give, we think, universal satisfaction. Sir James has long been foremost in his department of practice, and his name is associated with the discovery of that invaluable boon to suffering humanity—chloroform. This alone would entitle him to the honour he has received. Sir James Y. Simpson is distinguished as an obstetric practitioner, as a physiologist, as an operator, and as a pathologist of great research and originality. His reputation is European, and the honour is fully deserved." Medical journals in America, in France, and Germany soon followed in the same hearty strain. In some of these journals, both British and Foreign, he had often been bitterly attacked. It must have given him high satisfaction to witness how readily they now forgot the past, and spontaneously said "worthy."

Before the patent of nobility could be completed, much had to be done in determining the armorial bearings. A "coat" had to be drafted showing the Simpson, "differenced" with the Jarvey arms; as the Simpson arms proper were borne by the head of the family, all others could only bear them with "a difference." To settle this grave matter was quite in the line of his own tastes and studies. But, to guard against mistakes, he got the help of his friend Dr. Joseph Robertson, of the General Register House. The matter was an agreeable amusement to both.

"My dear Sir James,—The little that I have had to do in the matter of your arms and pedigree has only been an agreeable amusement. It would have been a pleasure in any case—it has been a gratification of the highest kind to be allowed to show my interest in the well-merited honours of one whom I have so much reason to love and admire. You really conferred an obligation upon me by permitting me to get my hand into the business.

"For the further obligation under which you have laid me, by your kind and beautiful gift, I do not know how to thank you. I can only assure you that it will be treasured by me and mine as the memorial of a friendship which is the delight and the pride of, your ever faithful and obliged,

"Joseph Robertson."

George Herbert puts the contrast between the rejoicing and sorrowing of the Christian life very quaintly thus,—

"At first Thou gavest me milk and sweetness;
I had my wish and way:
My days were strewed with flowers and happiness,
There was no month but May.
But with my years sorrow did twist and grow,
And made a party unawares for woe."

It was thus in Sir James Simpson's experience in the beginning of 1866. Sorrow trod on the heels of joy. When the light in

his dwelling was brightest, a deep dark shadow fell athwart the sunshine. In his letter to Walter, then in Egypt, Sir James referred to the illness of his eldest son, Dr. David James Simpson, and added, "he looks quite like himself to-night." But hope was soon blighted.

Steps were being taken by his friends to testify their gratification with the honour conferred on him by his Sovereign. It was their desire to signalize Professor Simpson's elevation to a Baronetcy by entertaining him at a public dinner on an early day, and arrangements, of which Sir James Gardiner Baird, Bart., Sir David Brewster Principal of the University, Dr. John Smith President of the Royal College of Physicians, and Dr. James Dunsmure President of the Royal College of Surgeons, had taken charge, were far advanced with that view, the Earl of Dalhousie having cordially agreed to act as chairman. But these arrangements were set aside by the death of his son, which took place at 52 Queen Street, on the 14th of January, in the twenty-fourth year of his age. David had taken his degree in the University of Edinburgh in 1863, and in the same year had obtained the license of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons. He then held the office of a Resident Physician in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, and after spending some time in studying in Vienna, he was called to succeed his cousin, Dr. Alexander Simpson, in assisting his father in his private practice, conjointly with Dr. Black. He had held the office of Senior President of the Royal Medical Society, and was a member of the Obstetric Society of Edinburgh. He had also distinguished himself by an able paper in the literature of his profession. In many respects, David bore a great likeness to his father, who had seen with joy his admirable gifts and growing attainments. But the rich promise was early blighted. During that time of spiritual quickening which brought so much blessing to other members of the household, Dr. David Simpson had given evidence of a change like that experienced by his father. Like him too, he began to take much interest in God's work,

and to speak to others on religious matters with great point and earnestness.

"52 Queen Street, 16/10/62.

"Dear Mrs. Barbour,—I'm quite ashamed of never having acknowledged your kind letter yet, but you know my lazy nature, and will, I am sure, pardon my neglect. We had such a delightful night at the Assembly Hall on Sunday night. No one could doubt the presence of the Spirit. . . . I never listened to such a stirring appeal as Alick was enabled to give, such encouragement for Christ's people, and awful warning to His enemies. About £45 was collected for the distressed operatives. A young medical missionary going to Calcutta also gave us a very, very faithful address. . . . A. B.'s father has been thrown from his horse, and had his skull fractured. I wonder if this be the means God is employing to mould his heart to His will. John Berryman has left us. It makes a great gap in the family.—With kindest love to all, believe me, yours,

"D. J. Simpson.

'And I will give him my new name.'"

After a time, however, the effects of this work on David seemed to die away. A period of carelessness and indifference succeeded; the thorns began to hinder the growth of the seed; and, as often happens in like instances, some hastily concluded that the period of religious earnestness was no more than the fruit of the reflex influence of Christian truth, on a man of deep natural feeling and strong sentiment. But it was afterwards found, that throughout this season of apparent indifference his recent spiritual experiences had again and again been influential. It was, moreover, to be made manifest that the seed had been truly received into the heart, and was ready, when God's day again came in power, to spring up and bear the rich fruits of repentance towards God, child-like confidence in Christ, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Its appearance was to bring comfort to his father when he needed it most, and to save

him from that bitterest of all trials—the apostasy from the faith of Jesus Christ of one he loved.

"Edinburgh, 52 Queen St., 16*th Jan.* 1866.

"My own dear Wattie,—I have to write to you grievous, most grievous and heart-rending news. The dark shadow of death is over my house; and God in His inscrutable providence has been pleased to call dear, dear Davie home to Himself. He left us here on Sunday afternoon about three—now nearly forty-eight hours ago, and yet it is difficult to realize the fact that he is dead. It is needless to say to you how utterly overwhelmed and crushed we all feel; and I have got out of bed chiefly to write you these dreadful and melancholy news.

"I never knew how very, very, very dear he was to my heart till now he is gone from us for ever; and I cannot tell you in words the kind and unceasing care with which he has latterly watched over me, to save me all possible trouble and anxiety, and in all possible ways.

"When I wrote you last week he had been already eight or ten days ill, but was better, though not able to leave his bed. At the beginning of his attack he had severe vomiting, jaundice, and threatening of ileus—all of which passed off; but he did not completely rally, and on Thursday an eruption appeared and spread rapidly. On Saturday it took the form of purpura (which Dr. Ogilvie will explain to you), and he became insensible and sank.

"Between Friday and Saturday I lay beside him, and told him how afraid I was of the result. He thought it was death himself. And then he told me, in words which I can never forget, that though a wayward Christian, he felt sure that Jesus was his Saviour and Friend, and would take him to Himself. 'Jesus is mine, Jesus is mine.' Oh my dear, dear Wattie, you and I, and all of us, have no friend whom we can *always* trust and always rely on but Jesus; and in the infinitude of His love He is now stretching out to us His pierced hands, asking us to fly into His

brotherly arms for protection and safety for both time and eternity.

"I saw no friend yesterday except Mr. Pender, who came to my bedside and sat long beside me, the kindest of the kind. He is to send for you home immediately—by the same post, I believe, which carries this letter. And we all sadly long for you here, my own dear boy. . . .

"When God sent this terrible affliction upon me, I thought of not taking out the Baronetcy patent. But Mr. Pender, and all else, I hear, think that idea wrong, and almost, if not now quite, impossible. So reports to me, and advises me, my medical friend Dr. Wood, and he speaks for others. But all this brings, my dearest Wattie, new responsibilities upon you, and calls for multiplied exertions on your part. I shall require to re-write my will, and give you the greater part of the fortune I can leave you in order to support your future rank as a Baronet. . . . But I feel sure that in your generosity of heart you will ever be just and kind to all that call you by the name of brother. Dear, dear Davie insisted I should accept the honour, and I know he did so without a selfish feeling in his heart; it was, as he earnestly told me, for my sake, not his. . . . But of all this we shall talk more when we meet. And I pray God, in His love and mercy, to send you to me safely and speedily. Telegraph here when you can set off. We all long so to hear.

"My darling little Jessie is greatly broken down by this catastrophe. She is very helpless in bed, and would allow no one to dress her sores but Davie, 'Gentle Davie,' as she declared no hand to be *so* soft and kindly as his. I greatly fear you may miss her also when you come home, unless you come very soon.

"And when you do come, let me, as your loving father, say one thing more. At our family morning prayer I hope you will always be present, both to show *your* love to the King of Kings, and to be a fitting example to your two little loving brothers. Oh my own dear, dear Wattie, let you and I do all in our

power to acknowledge Jesus as our King and Saviour, and strive to lead others to His feet and throne.

"Mamma, Jessie, Willie, Magnus, and Eve all join in overflowing love.—Cordially, your ever affectionate father,

"J. Y. Simpson.

"*P.S.*—Two or three Sundays ago Dr. Hanna preached on the Judgment, and Jessie tells me Davie was greatly struck with the discourse, and repeated it to her nearly entirely after he came home. Dr. Black has been kind as a son to me. J. Y. S."

TO THE REV. A. STEWART, KILLIN.

"21*st January* 1866.

"My dear Mr. Stewart,—This is one of the first letters I have tried to write, and you will kindly, I know, excuse it. But I cannot send the enclosed without thanking you deeply, *very* deeply, for your kind note. . . .

"When he became dangerously ill, I told him so, and he spoke to me pleasantly—*so* pleasantly, that it breaks now the terribleness of the grief of losing him. He said *all* his trust was in Jesus, and repeated 'Jesus is mine'—'Jesus is mine.' Mrs. Barbour tells me that on visiting her professionally before he became ill, he remained praying with her for nearly an hour. During the last three or four months he has watched me like a nurse, trying to save me from all possible work and toil.

"My dear daughter, Jessie, was greatly shaken by his death. Davie was her doctor, for she held that no one touched and dressed her many sores so kindly, and lightly, and skilfully as 'Gentle Davie.'

"Mr. Pender has sent for Wattie home from Egypt. I pray God, *our* God, the God of love, to watch over him, and bring him home in safety. Pray for him and all of us.

"I can most truly say that it is well for us to be afflicted, as it draws us nearer and nearer to our loving Elder Brother.

"Kindest regards to Mrs. Stewart.—Yours always,

"J. Y. Simpson."

The letters of condolence were now as numerous as those of congratulation had been a few days before. They differed, however, in this: while the latter had come chiefly from the upper classes of society, the former were sent by friends belonging to almost every class. In looking over them, one from a poor tradesman, mindful of Sir James's kindness to those dear to him, was found lying next that of a Duchess with its few but hearty words:—"My dear friend, we grieve for you much. God bless you and comfort you, as He only can, and your poor wife." An Earl's coronet surmounts one; another is dated from the Victoria Lodging-House. Working men and millionnaires are equally cordial in telling their deep sympathy. Ministers of all denominations were forward to show their gratitude for the blessings of health he had brought to them and theirs, by speaking to him loving and tender words when he was weary. And as time glided past, and the tidings of bereavement reached distant lands, the communications increased. Men in Iceland and Australia, in Japan and in the remote Western States of America, in central India and in the Islands of the Pacific, hastened to tell him of their sympathy with him and his in their sore trouble. In some cases the writer is a mere youth, or a girl in her teens; in others, a man or woman in the prime of life, or some aged one of more than fourscore years. These letters illustrate most forcibly Sir James Simpson's great popularity, and the firm hold he had of the esteem and love of his fellow-men.

Only one of the notes of condolence is given here. The writer is Mrs. Grindlay, Lady Simpson's mother, who at the time of "Davie's" death had reached the advanced age of eighty-nine years. Sir James and Lady Simpson are addressed:—

"My dear Children,—My heart is with you both. I pray the Lord, by His Holy Spirit, may strengthen and support you both, and enable you to say under this sore bereavement, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the

name of the Lord.' God bless you, and spare you both to your dear family.—With love and sympathy, your affectionate mother, MARGARET GRINDLAY."

They had, indeed, a warm place in many human hearts. Human eyes rested tenderly on them, and loving human hands were ready to help. Yet all this would have fallen on them like dew on withered grass, giving no true and substantial and lasting comfort, had they not seen Christ's heart in this sympathy, and Christ's hand in all this sorrow. He afflicteth—but not willingly. He would rather not afflict. Sir James soon had still further experience of this. In about a month after David's death, his eldest daughter, Jessie—Sunbeam—died at the early age of seventeen. This new stroke was keenly felt. Jessie had been to him a great delight. Though her health had for several years been delicate, he had the strong hope that, under his care, strength would return. The strength of the previous hope only gave depth and poignancy to the disappointment. Yet again he had ground of comfort, for Jessie, too, had given clearest proofs of deep and earnest, and childlike love to Christ. And standing by her coffin he was able, as when he knelt by those of Jamie and of Davie, to say, "Even so, Father;" "Not my will, but Thine be done," and to hear Christ's very voice: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

Sir James returned to his work chastened in spirit but not depressed. The conviction that "all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ," had led him to feel in the heart of his sorrow very differently from those who see in providences only the hand of inexorable fate. He saw in them the loving tender hand and warm yearning heart of his heavenly Father. A man thus healthily exercised is not likely to fall into that mental gloom, whose humility is often only one of the subtlest forms of pride, whose contempt for mercies, and whose indisposition for the common employments

and daily duties of life, are frequently no more than the fruits of wounded egotism. It was not thus with him. "He said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." The world with its common wants, its secular pursuits, its homely work, and even its routine of little duties and trivial acts, had his regards as earnestly after these great sorrows as before. What his hands found to do he did with his might, without vexing himself with the question, which some onlookers were sure to raise, whether he might not have had higher objects before him. The work came to his hand, and this was enough. Shortly after Jessie's death he agreed to be enrolled an honorary member of the Torphichen or 3d corps of Linlithgowshire Volunteers. In the beginning of the summer he originated and carried through a movement to provide within the walls of the University a restaurant for the students. In May the impending struggle between Italy and Austria for the possession of Venice got much of his attention, inquiries having been sent to him about supplies of chloroform, acupressure pins, etc., for the camp ambulance service. These, and many other similar matters, shared his efforts, along with religious meetings, special services for the upper classes, Christian work in destitute districts of Edinburgh, or in the mining villages of Linlithgowshire, schemes for the extension of medical missions, for preaching the gospel in Egypt, for the education of the theological students of the Waldensian Church, etc. The bitter experiences of the past winter—"No chastening for the present seemed to be joyous, but grievous"—and his more than abundant labours, were followed by severe indisposition.

When recovering from this attack he received a communication from the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, dated June 4, 1866, informing him that "it will be proposed to confer on him the degree of Doctor of Civil Law at a con-

vocation to be holden on Wednesday the 13th inst.," and expressing the hope "that it would be convenient for him to be present." The candidates for the honour on this occasion were presented in the following order:—"Sir Frederick Currie, Bart., late Chief Secretary to the Supreme Government in India, and now member of the Indian Council; Sir James Y. Simpson, Bart., M.D., F.R.S.E., of the University of Edinburgh; Gathorne Hardy, M.A., Oriel College, one of the burgesses for the University of Oxford; Alphonse de Candolle, corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the Institute of France; Joseph Dalton Hooker, M.D., F.R.S., Director of the Royal Gardens at Kew; the Rev. Charles Merivale, B.D., St. John's College, Cambridge, chaplain to the House of Commons; William Thomson, M.A., F.R.S., Professor of Natural Philosophy, Glasgow; James Prescott Jule, F.R.S.; and John Philips, F.R.S., M.A."

There are many proofs that his Christian work in 1866 bore good fruit. Sometimes the tidings of its influence reached him from unexpected quarters. Years before he had assisted a servant, who had fallen into dissipated habits, to emigrate to Australia. The tidings of his old master's change reached him at Ballarat, and was to him the means of blessing. "One of my fellow-servants," he wrote from Ballarat, "brought a pamphlet into the stable and showed me an article written by you, in which you say 'that if the photograph of the sinful soul could be taken, few would like the world to see it, far less their friends,' etc. After reading the article, and your name to it, I went up and down the stable crying aloud. My fellow-servants thought me mad." Then he tells, in a very touching way, that this brought to his mind a letter he had received from a former fellow-servant shortly after James's death. "When I got it I did not think much about it; but, when I again turned it up this week, I cried like a child." . . . "I have been a teetotaller for three years, and, God helping me, will be for life. Dear friends, I thank my God and Saviour

Jesus Christ, that through the influence of His Holy Spirit I was brought to think of God as I never thought before."

Sir James was working willingly at articles on professional and archæological literature. But he did not see his way to agree to applications from conductors of religious publications, for papers on theological subjects.

FROM THE REV. DR. BLAIKIE.

"13*th August* 1866.

"My dear Sir James,—The *Sunday Magazine* commences its third volume next month with increased prospects of success and continued circulation of many thousand copies.

"Mr. Strahan the publisher, and Dr. Guthrie the editor, have desired me to apply to you, in the hope that you will give a paper on 'Our Lord's Miracles of Healing,' which at one time you promised to endeavour to prepare. Allow me to say that I would regard it as a great matter if you could accomplish this. It would be a great gratification to Dr. Guthrie to have your co-operation. It would be a great service to the cause of truth to have you bearing your witness to our Lord, in these days especially, when so many efforts are made by men of learning and science to diminish the glory of His life and of His work. I know well the difficulty you have in writing, but permit me to say that if you should once resolve to do it, you would probably be able to accomplish it. I leave the matter in the hands of Him who, if He designs that by this means His cause is to be advanced, will be sure to provide the means by which it is to be done.

"The ms. would need to be ready by the 10th of next month at latest. (Copies go to Australia on the 17th.)

"Hoping and trusting you may find it practicable and pleasant to overtake this, I remain, yours most sincerely and respectfully, W. G. Blaikie."

The publication of Sir Charles Lyell's work in 1863, on the

"Antiquity of Man," led to a great crop of volumes, essays, articles, and papers to learned Societies on the same subject. For a considerable time Sir James kept clear of the discussions; but in a few years he went into the heart of them in search of definite and indisputable data. He soon discovered the utter hopelessness of this. No two writers were found at one in their views of the same phenomena; and even when it appeared that they had reached the same conclusion, the value of their testimony was shaken, by finding that the valid facts of one party were held not to be facts at all by another. In the summer of 1866, when compelled to leave active professional work for a season, he entered with great earnestness into these discussions. We shall see that they influenced him in the direction of the theory of the immense antiquity of man; but he was never sure of his ground here, because the discussion demanded an acquaintance with at least one branch of science to which he made no pretensions. Shortly after his return from Oxford he was again compelled to seek rest. From Liverpool he wrote to Dr. Black, his assistant:—

"*Wednesday, six o'clock.*

MY OWN DEAR DR.,—"I write a line, after the marriage and the feast, both of which have gone off well and happily.

"We had a very quiet passage—no sickness.

"Be so good as send over the *last* number of the Cambrian Archæological Journal (the blue Journal). It contains two papers on Man. We looked for it, but missed it. Possibly it may be in a 'bag' in the lowest right drawer in my bedroom. The bag brought up books from Viewbank.

"I have felt better from the hour I left Edinburgh; but the journey to Liverpool was very tiresome. Last night my leg chose to keep me pained and awake, but I have walked with it this afternoon *several* times in pure despite, and I think it is yielding as rapidly as I could hope. Dr. Petrie had some grand liniment to rub my leg with.

"I write upon a book on my knee, as there is much noise and disturbance around, and no tables.

"Eve begs to send her love to you.—Yours always,

"J. Y. Simpson.

"*P.S.*—I must be greatly stronger before I can work again. If you find an *Athenæum* five or six weeks old, with a *speech* of Lubbock's in it, send it."

As the Session drew near, he found it necessary to obtain leave of absence, and the sanction of the Senatus to employ a substitute to conduct his class, in the event of continued indisposition. Dr. Keiller carried on the class work for two months.

In December he addressed the following letter to his dear friend Dr. Joseph Robertson, whose death occurred shortly afterwards :—

"52 Queen Street, Edinburgh.

"My dear Dr. Robertson,—Believe me, I am extremely distressed at the idea that I cannot go over and see you, but I have not yet been able to get further than the next room.

"This morning I was rejoiced to hear from Mr. Stuart that you were somewhat relieved, and that the oysters, etc., were not rejected.

"Dr. Ziegler and I talked yesterday of various things for you to try.

"But our good friend Mr. Irvine tells me you wish to know exactly what I think of your condition and prospects, as far as your dysphagia is concerned.

"Now, I know you will bear with me kindly and bravely when I say that, from the first, I had the gravest suspicions of the character of your ailment, and that these suspicions have changed more and more to certainty as the malady has progressed.

"To-day or to-morrow I have to sign a new will, for this Baronetcy of mine (which looks such a bauble in sickness, even

more than in health) necessitates a variety of new arrangements, and I have tried to make all things straight and right in a worldly point of view. After what I have said, I know that I need not add to you that it will only be proper for you to place your affairs, papers, etc., in such order as you deem best.

"And now, my dear Mr. Robertson, pardon me if I add one paragraph more. You and I are too good antiquaries not to know that He—the second Person in the Trinity—by whose hands all this grand and beautiful physical world of ours was made (John i. 3), was foreordained before the creation of it (1 Peter i. 20) to have those very hands nailed upon the cross to purify the foul moral world and save the human race, whom the earth bare, from the punishment of their own dire sins and guilt. That sacrifice in our stead, and to 'cleanse away *all* our sins,' is archæologically a fact that occurred some eighteen centuries ago, and is past and done as certainly as the battle of Marathon or Hastings or Bannockburn are past and done. And the wondrous fact remains, that '*whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' We can do nothing to wash away our guilt before God, but Christ HAS done all that is required to wash away your guilt and my guilt in God's own eyes, and according to God's own declared will and law, if simply you and I believe in the work of His Son and accept the blood of Jesus as *our* Substitute and our Saviour. 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou SHALT be saved.' No secondary conditions are attached, Jesus has suffered all for us, and done all, if we only trust Him in all.

'Bear not a single care thyself,
One is too much for thee;
The work is *Mine*, and Mine alone,
THY work is—Rest in Me.'

"I know that you and I place all hopes and certainties indeed upon the same immutable foundation, and I know you will kindly bear with me in these remarks, and allow me to sign myself your ever sincere friend, J. Y. SIMPSON.

"*P.S.*—I write in bed, and hence very illegibly. Sir Wm. Gibson-Craig has been here at my bedside for half-an-hour this morning grieving and lamenting, like a father, over your illness. J. Y. S."

TO MRS. PENDER.

"52 QUEEN STREET, EDINBURGH, 27*th Dec.* /66.

"MY DEAR MRS. PENDER,—I should have written you some days ago, to say how hopeless I was of having *the* great pleasure of spending two or three days at Crumpsall. Within the last few days I am *much* better, and my leg is improved, though I fear I would only have been an incumbrance upon you all at Crumpsall if I had gone to you. But my wife has been so unwell, and still is so, that I cannot leave here.

"We have here at present Professor Stephens of Copenhagen, who has written a long dissertation on the Cat-Stane,—taking my view, and going far beyond it.

"Believe me, with the deepest esteem and gratitude, always truly yours, J. Y. SIMPSON."

When the classes re-assembled after the Christmas holidays, Sir James was able to resume his professorial work. Though still lame and weak, he felt very happy in meeting his students again. The following notice appeared in the *Courant* newspaper next day:—"Since the beginning of the session he has been confined to the house, and for the most part to bed, with a severe attack of rheumatism and sciatica in the left leg, and his class, previous to the holidays, has been conducted by Dr. Keiller. Professor Simpson, in reappearing among his students yesterday, was enthusiastically received by a crowded class, which assembled in Dr. Christison's class-room, Sir James being unable to mount the stairs to his own. The learned Professor expressed great pleasure in meeting his students once more, and made some jocular observations as to his recent

illness. He had, he said, been told the other day by his servant that there was a rumour abroad that he was in Saughton or Morningside. He asked his servant what reply he had made, when the latter stated that, so far from being wrong in his mind, he was writing a book in bed. While he did not say that his servant's answer was strictly true, he was happy to assure his pupils that he was quite right in his mind, although a friend had hinted that morning that he was rather weak in his *understanding!* Professor Simpson went on to express his thanks to Dr. Keiller for having so ably conducted his class in his absence, and to Professor Christison for the accommodation of his class-room. He then delivered the first of a course of lectures on Anæsthesia."

At the close of the Session he had with Mr. Pender "a scamper" to Switzerland. Walter accompanied them. When in Paris he says:—

"Once or twice my father got me up about seven A.M. to go with him 'on a prowl' as interpreter. One of these mornings was spent in a surgical instrument-maker's, where my father gave and received a good deal of information. Another morning I remember particularly we visited one of the hospitals. After going the round of the wards along with the students, we went into the operating theatre. A leg long dislocated, and therefore difficult to set, was successfully manipulated by the surgeon, the patient being under chloroform. The surgeon then addressed the students (my father understood French, though not a fluent speaker), pointing out how it would have been much more difficult to set the leg had the patient's muscles not been relaxed by sleep, and at the same time eulogizing chloroform generally. My father stepped forward and handed in his card. It is easy to imagine the *empressé* politeness of the Professor and the enthusiasm and astonishment of the students at this little coincidence."

Sir James's letters show how much he enjoyed this trip :—

TO LADY SIMPSON.

"BERNE, *Tuesday, 15th April* /67.

"MY DEAR JESSIE,—Walter wrote you from Geneva. . . .

"I have had no word from home, as Sir Emerson Tennent, who was to join us at Brussels for Copenhagen, could not come there, his son being ill, and we consequently ran off here. I expect there will be letters at Brussels. It is doubtful if we go there. We expect to be in London on Monday or Tuesday.

"I have been immensely better since I left. In Paris I did wonders by myself in the way of walking. At Geneva I felt knocked up by a fifteen hours' ride from Paris. Dr. Lombard was very kind there, and they offered to summon the Medical Society together if I would wait and meet them. We all liked Neuchatel better than Geneva. Last night I went to bed at eight, and had a long refreshing sleep. I write this as we wait to go down to the table-d'hôte. I have seen a great many antiquarian objects. Tell Dr. Black I saw, among other things in Paris, the mammoth figured in my book. MM. Lartet, Bertrand, and Matillet, three of their principal antiquaries, accompanied us out to St. Germains, where an imperial museum of antiquities is collecting. It kept us a day longer in Paris, but on the same morning I had an opportunity of showing the chief operator at the Hôtel Dieu, M. Richet, the mode of applying acupressure in a case of mammary tumour which he removed. He seemed greatly pleased. I have run out of all my needles long ago.

"We saw a great collection of antiquities to-day at Bienne, among them a cupped stone. Yesterday I saw at Neuchatel portions of charred bread, apples, wheat, thread and cloth from lacustrine houses of the stone age, and hence very, very old indeed. . . .

"Love to all at home.—Yours ever, J. Y. SIMPSON.

"*P.S.*—Tell Eve I'll write her to-morrow or next day, if able, with some news."

TO MISS GRINDLAY.

"BERNE, 16*th April* 1867.

"MY DEAR ISABELLA,—I have had often your song 'Oft in the stilly night' running in my head of late, and at Geneva got a cup of green tea from Mrs. Lombard which kept me awake. To spend the time I tried to make some doggrels to your old favourite tune, but I fear I have made the first and third lines all too long. Burn them if they do not please you. Their only merit is they were written on the banks of the Lake of Geneva, which is so full of fond recollections to every leal Scotsman.

"I have improved greatly in health since I left, though you may be sure Mr. Pender and I work 'as hard' at travelling abroad as we do at our own trades at home. Kindest love to mamma and Mina.—Yours ever truly,

"J. Y. SIMPSON.

Oft 'mid this world's ceaseless strife,
When flesh and spirit fail me,
I stop and think of another life
Where ills can ne'er assail me;
Where my wearied arm shall cease its fight,
My heart shall cease its sorrow;
And this dark night changed for the light
Of an everlasting morrow.

On earth below there's naught but woe,
E'en mirth is gilded sadness;
But in heaven above there 's nought but love
With all its raptured gladness;
There, till I come, waits me a home,
All human dreams excelling,
In which at last, when life is past,
I 'll find a regal dwelling.
Oft 'mid this world's, etc.

Then shall be mine, through grace divine,
A rest that knows no ending,
Which my soul's eye would fain descry,
Though still with clay 'tis blending.

And, Saviour dear, while I tarry here,
Where a Father's love hath found me,
Oh! let me feel, through woe and weal,
Thy guardian arms twined round me.
Oft 'mid this world's, etc.

(GENEVA, *April* 14, 1867.)

"My dear Jessie's last words:—'In my father's house,' etc., ring oft in my ears. J. Y. S."

TO LADY SIMPSON.

"PARIS, HOTEL DE LIVERPOOL, 21*st April*,
(*Opposite Hotel Castiglione*) RUE DE LA PAIX.

"MY DEAREST JESSIE,—We have scampered over a great part of Switzerland in six days, and left Zürich yesterday at one P.M. for Paris. . . .

"I am much better and stronger than when I left, and have walked, etc., more than I ever expected to do in life again.

"We started from Geneva to Neuchatel and Berne. Thence we run for Thun, Interlaken, and Lucerne. . . .

"Dr. Keller, the archæologist at Zürich, was kind beyond measure, showing us flax-thread, cloth, looms, etc., used in Switzerland in the stone age. He took Mr. P. and me (the young gentleman was asleep with fatigue) to see the church in which Zuingle preached, which I loved to visit, as I have so great an admiration for his memory. We are going to see some of the churches here to-day. . . .

"I became medical for ten minutes yesterday, and asked Dr. Keller to take us to a cutlery shop. They had five sets of obstetric forceps, and showed me mine, telling us it was 'Sampson's.' Dr. K. was greatly amused at finding I was a doctor as well as a pseudo-archæologist. He had been reading a paper on chloroform last week, and then it suddenly struck him that my name was connected with it. Love to all.—Yours ever, J. Y. SIMPSON."

On the 20th of June a large and influential meeting of the inhabitants of Edinburgh, called by the Lord Provost, was held in Queen Street Hall for the purpose of adopting measures to secure for Scotland a just share of representation in the

House of Commons. Sir James moved one of the resolutions, and delivered a short, happy speech in its support, which was frequently interrupted by the applause of the audience.

In August Sir James attended a meeting of the profession in Dublin, and used the occasion of his visit to Ireland to spend a few days at Dromore Castle, Kerry.

TO LADY SIMPSON.

"*Saturday Morning.*

"My dear Jessie,—Just starting for Killarney, where Wattie went yesterday. Have had a very busy week. Everybody kinder to me than every other. For really they have idolized and cheered me more than any one else, I believe.

"Too many demands for consultation.

"Hope you are all well. Rejoiced to hear that your voyage had been as prosperous as ours. Love to all.—Yours ever,

"J. Y. Simpson."

"My dearest Jessie,—I arrived here on Friday, coming home by Dublin from Kerry, and hence by Llandudno to see Mrs. Aveling of Sheffield. It was in consequence of nightly messages and telegraphs about Lady R. that I ran homewards. I scarcely got two days' rest when away, and feel weak and shabby enough since I returned.

"Walter was averse to go to Dromore, and averse to leave it. He has written you all this. It is a most beautiful and charming place, and the people quite delightful. I have seldom spent in my life three brighter days. But the quantity of poor patients that I was obliged to see was rather troublesome. The moonlight boating scenes on Kenmare bay (for both nights we sailed till twelve midnight) were something never to be forgotten.

"One day we went down 'free and easy' to the Bishop of Limerick's;—free and easy, as we took our salmon, lamb, etc., with us, and cooked them in the Bishop's kitchen. He and all his family accompanied us in the dark to the beach as we left,

and on the top of his episcopal hat he carried the candle to light us on our way, putting one in mind of the old saints with their 'bell, book, and candle.' As we rowed off, the shore party sung a most beautiful and wild parting song, to which our boat party duly replied. During the afternoon the bulk of our party—including Mr. and Mrs. Balfour—visited that fairy spot, Lord Dufferin's Isle. But the Bishop, who is at the head of the Irish antiquaries, carried me off to the mountain-moors, and showed me there some stones and rocks marked with the cups and circles that I have described in my work on 'Archaic Sculpturings.' It was truly 'eerie and awesome' to see them in that distant locality—ancient sculptures so very like those I had seen in Northumberland and Scotland, that truly they looked as if they had been all cut by the same hand. To discover some of them the Bishop had removed four feet of turf accumulated on the bare face of the sculptured rocks.

"In Dublin every person was kinder than another. In all meetings and places I had the seat of honour thrust upon me, which involved a great deal of speaking. But I was in the spirit of it; and when the struggle came—as it did twice or thrice—between English, Irish, and Scotch speaking, Scotland (so they averred) was not last. We had a great dinner of nearly 300 doctors. I was placed at the side of the President (Dr. Stokes), and had to drink his health.

"Things are quiet at home; but I had a good levee on Friday and yesterday. Last night Dr. Black handed me the enclosed note, and he and I had a good cry over it. But it is quite right. I dream of asking Dr. Malins of Liverpool, or Dr. Lachlan Aitken of Falkirk, to take his place. I *most* heartily approve of his choice of a wife.

"The Bagots continue to be delighted with Viewbank.

"Dr. Hanna gave us to-day a discourse on Jonah and Miracles. It was the best sermon I have heard for many a day.

"Puck *was* delighted to see me, and has scarcely left my

side. The first night I went up to bed he ran up before me, and when I got there he was already stretched out on one of the pillows at full length—not curled up—and wagging his tail violently.

"Acupressure made a great stride forward at the Dublin meeting. Professor Smith tried to show that an old author, about 1500, had described it. But I know the author well, and have last night written a communication to the London journals to show that Mr. Smith has mistranslated the passage, of which there is not a fragment of a doubt.

"Do write me soon, and all the news. My kindest love to Willie, Magnus, and Eve.—Yours always, J. Y. SIMPSON."

The following is the note over which he and Dr. Black had "a good cry." Sir James had a high opinion of Dr. Black's professional accomplishments, and loved him very warmly. He had acted as assistant for several years.

"*Saturday.*

"MY DEAR SIR JAMES,—I have got engaged to be married, and I must therefore begin to make arrangements for leaving my present situation and settling down in life.

"It is indeed with real sorrow that I think of going away from 52 Queen Street, and the kind friends I have found here. To you I am and ever shall be profoundly grateful for all your exceeding kindness towards me. I thank you from my heart also for the matchless professional advantages I have enjoyed here during the last five years. Moreover, I came here dead in trespasses and sins, and God has been pleased in His mercy to meet and quicken me; and I bless you for having brought me to this my spiritual birthplace.

"I have as yet no definite plans for the future, except the long cherished, and, to my mind, indispensable one of spending a while on the Continent.—Believe me, ever yours affectionately, J. W. BLACK."

Another visit was paid to Ireland in September, to attend a

meeting of the Social Science Association, held in Belfast. In the department of public health he delivered an address, for which he received not only the thanks of the Association, but the thanks of the public press also, and the congratulations of many private correspondents. The address is characterized by vigorous thought, clear views of the situation as regarded the sanitary movement, and much prudent counsel to those who were actively engaged carrying it out.

The years 1866-1867 were among the busiest of Sir James's life, notwithstanding repeated attacks of illness. His archæological investigations and correspondence were extensive and important. Perhaps at no previous time had he gone so deep into his favourite pursuit as in the course of these years. He had become a kind of archæologist-in-chief for the British Isles. Few discoveries were made which were not communicated at once to him. The Roman denarius which the Border ploughman found in his furrow; the piece of Roman pottery met with in improving the drainage of some provincial town; the stone cist exposed in carting sand for building purposes; the ancient cinerary urn of pre-Roman epochs; the flint arrow or spear-head; the stone celt, or the bronze spear, gathered in some ancient field of deadly strife; the whorls of prehistoric distaffs, or the comb used by the prehistoric weaver for the purpose of keeping his threads clean and apart;—all these articles, and many others, were with due haste reported to 52 Queen Street.

Dr. Cowie writes to him on the medical superstitions of Shetland; Mr. J. Warre Tyndale responds to Sir James's inquiries regarding the Baal fires of Corsica and Sardinia; the Rev. John James Muir, now of Jersey, describes the limestone caves of Lismore; Colonel Macdonald of St. Martins obtains for him information about a circle at Blairgowrie; Mr. A. W. Franks, of the British Museum, refers to the age of articles found in interments near standing stones; Dr. Arthur Mitchell calls his attention to "cups on a stone at Stoney Kirk;" Mr.

A. Gibb describes the stone at Migvie, Aberdeenshire; Mr. Conwell communicates with him touching "cupped stones" at Trim, co. Meath; Mr. W. H. Henderson, Linlithgow, records a visit to Arran, and the discovery of a stone cist in Glen Sannox; Mr. Hutchison of Carlowrie gives an account of cists, etc., found at South Queensferry; Mr. Thomson of Banchory corresponds with him with reference to the "Newton Stone;" Mr. Birch, of the British Museum, treats of the relative age of cromlechs and Greek primitive mounds; Mr. E. L. Barnwell sends him a notice of standing stones near Bath; Lord Blantyre shows that "an iron nail taken from a mummy case is modern;" Lord Dunraven gives an account of his discovery of circles on stones at Kerry—"Our great find was a large rock covered with circles." Mr. John Evans sends notes of a visit to the Plain of Clava, Inverness, and a sketch of two stones with cup markings; Mr. James Drummond, R.S.A., writes from Mr. Pender's place, Minard Castle, concerning "a worship cup with a double circle" in the old burial-ground at Inverary; Mr. John Kenrick, author of a history of Phœnicia, supplies information regarding the composition of ancient brass; Dr. Graves and Dr. Stokes make inquiries about Irish antiquities. Yet these are only a comparatively few examples of the communications which, during 1866 and 1867, reached him almost daily.

Sir James Simpson's own most important contribution to archæology at this time is entitled "Archaic Sculpturings of Cups, Circles, etc., upon Stones and Rocks in Scotland, England, and other Countries." The work is inscribed "with feelings of very deep respect" to Sir David Brewster. This work is in Sir James's best style, notwithstanding that a great part of it was written to dictation during the illness already referred to, and when he was so racked with rheumatism as to be unable to bear being turned in bed, except when partially under the influence of chloroform. It is the book, the writing of which his butler adduced as proof of

his sanity. It bears evidence of great care in its preparation, and is a good example of the application of scientific methods of investigation to subjects of this kind. It illustrates, perhaps better than any of his other archæological papers, his extraordinary knowledge of facts, and his skill in using them to shed light on prehistoric times. The field surveyed is so wide, and the sources of information are so many and varied, that it is impossible to give such a summary of the contents of the work as will convey an adequate idea of its true scope and interest to the reader, and especially of the thoroughness with which its author has done his work. "Among the earliest," he says, "and yet the most enduring traces of archaic man in this country, are probably to be reckoned his cuttings or sculpturings on rocks and stones. Some of his rudest, and hence, perhaps, his most primitive lapidary carvings, consist of rounded shallow excavations, pits, or cups, and of incised rings or concentric circles. . . . Amidst the numerous varieties of them which have already been discovered, six or seven general types can be easily traced; and the enumeration of these types in the first instance will simplify the study of the whole subject." The locality of the stones on which cup markings occur is specified, and much information regarding the general antiquities of the districts in which they are met with is given. The text is illustrated by a number of highly-finished plates.

Under the head "General Inferences," he examines such questions as the import of the sculpturings, their alleged Phœnician origin, their probable ornamental character, their possibly religious character, their age or date, etc. As to the last, the question of age, he says, "As yet we want a sufficient body or collection of data to determine with any accuracy the exact age or ages and periods at which the lapidary cup and ring cuttings we have described were sculptured. But the facts we possess are quite sufficient, I think, to prove that the date or dates at which they were for the most part formed must be

very remote. In evidence of their remote or archaic character, I shall appeal in the following chapters to their precedence of letters and traditions ; to various data regarding the connexion of these rude sculptures with the dwellings and sculptures of archaic man ; to the archaic character of the antiquarian relics with which they have been found in combination ; and to their geographical distribution as bearing upon their antiquity."

About thirty years ago the Scandinavian antiquaries, looking chiefly at the implements used by the prehistoric tribes of the north of Europe, proposed the generalizations—"Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age," to indicate periods in which, severally, implements of stone, of bronze, or of iron were in common use. In a short time these terms came to embrace all traces of men during the respective periods, and they are now held to express characteristic stages of civilisation. It is not my intention to discuss here the grounds for these wide inductions, or to dwell on their defects. In some respects they fail to make clear the existence of the definite character assigned to each. They have, however, been most useful to archæologists as general working plans. On the whole, then, they convey a pretty fair impression of certain stages of prehistoric time, though I think it might be shown, that many who have taken them as absolutely accurate expressions of scientific truth, have, not unseldom, been led into error. This will not cause surprise, when it is remembered that the materials for the inductions are of a kind with which historic criticism has not been long familiar.

More recently the first great epoch has been divided into *Palæolithic*, or First Stone Age, and *Neolithic*, or Second Stone Age. Geology has taken archæology by the hand, and promised to be her guide in a quarter entirely new, strange, and by many believed to be full of fresh and independent information as to the length of time man has been on the earth, as to his original condition, and, generally, as to his intellectual and moral attainments in primeval days. But many most difficult

physical problems demand solution before the archæologist can safely venture to generalize on these subjects, and especially on the first. Even if he hold, as I think he must, the contemporaneity of man with the great extinct mammals, it can be shown that he is not pledged thereby to the theory of the immense antiquity of the human race. Then there are literally hundreds of questions like the following, which he cannot leave unanswered and yet be sure of his ground :—

Was the glacial epoch one and general? Or have there been several glacial epochs in different geographical areas? Are students of surface geology agreed as to the age of the gravels from which traces of man have been obtained? Instead of taking the time of man's appearance into an indefinitely remote antiquity, are we not warranted to bring the epochs of physical changes nearer the hitherto recognised period of man's appearance, etc.?

Sir James did not attempt the solution of the problems now referred to, nor did he always bear in mind how much and how widely archæologists differ among themselves on many of the points indicated in this sketch of the great field of investigation. He stepped over the geological difficulties, and dealt at once with the archæological facts. The question of age was at once merged in, what to him was of higher interest, the manners of primeval times. He wished to know what prehistoric men said and did; what they believed, and how they lived.

It was, however, a sight full of interest to trace his work of building up laboriously, "unhasting yet unresting," his body of facts, and then pouring a fresh and vigorous life into the whole, by that highest labour of philosophy, generalization. His facts seemed to get heart, and arteries, and veins. He made men of them, and constrained them to speak, not of themselves, but of the men and women, the social habits, and even the physical condition of remote prehistoric times. Cuvier's law of correlation did almost as good service in Sir James's hands, though

in a different department, as it has done in those of Professor Owen, in that in which the great Frenchman specially worked. A fragment of pottery thus became to him a key to a state of civilisation. A bodkin, rudely formed from a red deer's tyne, suggested not only the industrial condition and household habits of a prehistoric people, but also, by a process in which both genius and trained powers of thought and observation had a place, the *flora* and *fauna* of a country and an age. Then, as we have seen, there was a goodly taint of superstition in his nature—a quality that is to the true antiquary what credulity is to the child—that, namely, which keeps the gates of knowledge ever open to what is weird, strange, and unexpected. But with him understanding conscientiously and carefully sifts what is received, and grains of wheat not a few reward his labour. Legend, and folk-lore, and exaggerated traditions are the worthless matrix in which he finds golden nuggets embedded.

One aspect of Sir James's antiquarian tastes has already been once or twice referred to, namely, their influence on his habits of literary work in professional branches of study. He always began at the beginning. Had he been a marine engineer, and asked to write an article on naval architecture, we would have had a disquisition on Noah's Ark, or a description of the swift ships of Homer, stating, perhaps, for the wonderment of fellow-workers, that the latter most likely were steamboats! At least he would have mastered every reference to his theme in all literature, and have used the records of the past to throw light on the waters ahead, not, as a lantern on the stern, on the waves behind.

He took his readers into his confidence, and told them all that had been written, or said, or done touching the subject in hand. This was the foundation on which he generally rested his argument. Often, indeed, the underlying mass was neither comely nor of much value. But occasionally it was true, seemly, substantial, and valuable. In the essays on *Leprosy*

and *Syphilis* this is well seen. But it has its highest expression in such professional memoirs as those on *Hermaphroditism, Diseases of the Placenta,* and *Anæsthesia.* In these papers there are countless references to sources of information, ancient, curious, and out of the way of most workers. When, as was frequently the case, moot points led to controversy, his opponents were put to a great disadvantage. We know of one who, when endeavouring to follow Sir James into this track, inquired at a public library for some little-known work, and was told by the librarian that "*the* Doctor had it out," adding, for his gratification, "Nobody knows anything of these books but himself!"

Nor was his caution less marked than the soundness and thoroughness of his methods of study. At a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, he said :—

"The collection of home-made pottery on the table—glazed with milk—is the latest contribution to our Museum. It was recently brought up by Captain Thomas and Dr. Mitchell from the parish of Barras, in the Lewis. These 'craggans,' jars, or bowls, and other culinary dishes, are certainly specimens of the ceramic art in its most primitive state;—they are as rude as the rudest of our old cinerary urns; and yet they constitute, in the places in which they were made and used, the principal cooking, dyeing, and household vessels possessed by some of our fellow-countrymen in this the nineteenth century. In the adjoining parish of Uig, Captain Thomas found and described to us two years ago, in one of his instructive and practical papers, the small beehive stone houses in which some of the nomadic inhabitants of the district still live in summer. Numerous antiquarian remains and ruins of similar houses and collections of houses exist in Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, Switzerland, and perhaps in other kingdoms; but apparently they have everywhere been long ago deserted as human habitations, except in isolated and outlying spots among the western islands of Scotland."

Caution is then added:—"Among the people of the district of Barras, most of them small farmers or crofters, a metal vessel or pot was a thing almost unknown twelve or fourteen years ago. Their houses have neither windows nor chimneys, neither tables nor chairs; and the cattle and poultry live under the same roof with their human possessors. If a Chinaman or Japanese landed at Barras, and went no further, what a picture might he paint, on his return home, of the state of civilisation in the British Islands!"

CHAPTER XIV.

Elected to the Office of the Eldership—Theological Difficulties—Note on Carbolic Acid—Lecture on Education—The Study of the Classics—Money Investments—Pyramid Controversy—Stamping out Smallpox—Death of Sir David Brewster—Surgeons' Hall Lecture on Anæsthesia—Letter from Professor Nilsson of Lund—Chancellorship of the University—Principalship—Opposition to Sir James—Unscrupulous conduct of some Opponents—Memorial in favour of Sir James—Committee of Inquiry—Generosity after Defeat.

I HAVE said that Sir James stepped over the geological difficulties in order to get at once among the traces of man in the earliest so-called "stone period." But the difficulties influenced him in another sphere. The Free Church congregation of which he was a member elected him to the office of the eldership. At ordination all office-bearers are required to subscribe a formula which binds them to the belief of all the doctrines stated in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

According to Sir James's reading of the section on Creation, it assumes that the age of the world is not more than six thousand years, an assumption which he held to be flatly contradicted by geology. But this was only his inference. The framers of the Westminster Confession nowhere assert this. "While," he said, "I most heartily and most sincerely believe in the general theological tenets laid down in the Westminster Confession of Faith, there are special and secondary doctrines in that Confession from which, so far as I understand them, I feel obliged to differ. I cannot, for example, subscribe to the

belief of the chapter on the Creation, that nothing of this world existed some six or seven thousand years ago." I have been able to trace the rise and decline of these views in his case. Like most men under the fresh flush and glow of warm spiritual life, he was nervously impatient and jealous of everything that seemed in the least to come between his soul and the direct statements of the Word of God. Men under this experience generally regard with suspicion every attempt to determine and regulate their belief by the views of others. Christ has spoken to them in the Bible. This is enough, they say; they do not want to see the truth diluted and presented to them as man's thoughts about the things of God. They will be Bible Christians.

While such a state of mind exists, it is of no use to point out that no man can be a Christian without a creed; that no two men could meet together for Christian converse without forming a creed, expressed or understood; that the Church could not become visible on the earth without one; or that the Churches could not fulfil the highest obligations laid on them by their living and exalted Head, if their members were not bound together by a common confession. Sir James was emerging from a state of mind bearing some resemblance to that now referred to, when his election to the eldership was thrust on his notice. The field of theological, as contrasted with Christian thought was new to him. It presented an arena for exciting debate; it brought with it an arousing power to battle with everything that seemed to come between men and their Bibles. This opportunity for theological discussion was the more eagerly seized, as he had at the time a sure and vivid consciousness of his own personal interest in Him who is "the true God and eternal life." When he saw the difficulty it would have been well had he been left to fight his own way out of it with the Bible in his hands. This he would have done honestly and bravely, whatever might be the consequence. He early communicated his views to me, but I waived discus-

sion, knowing that he had taken up ground from which controversy was not likely to move him. As was his wont, however, when his mind was set on a matter, he now dwelt on what he held to be the divergence of the Confession from the Bible and Science, in the presence of the friends and the strangers that crowded his table at breakfast or at luncheon. And soon ministers and elders of Presbyterian churches found themselves in an argument far from pleasant, though he seemed to enjoy it. The discussion widened, and came to embrace matters far asunder from the doctrine of Creation. The whole question is suggestive, as showing the influence which reiterated statements may have in influencing, if not fashioning, the belief even of educated men, who have not had the opportunity of thinking them out for themselves, or of studying their varied and often complicated relations. Had Sir James given less heed to crude schemes of reconciliation between Science and Scripture, thrust on his attention by writers on physico-theology, and more heed to the words of Genesis i. 1, ii. 1, and Exodus xx. 11, he would not have permitted the matter to influence him as for a short time it did.

It was pointed out to him, later, that there is a better way, and his views began to undergo considerable modifications. According to this, the days of Genesis are regarded as natural days, and not epochs. The word "beginning" is employed, according to Scripture usage, as a preface to the narrative which follows, and is held to have no reference to geologic time. Geology is kept outside of the first chapter of Genesis, and is left in that wide sphere in which it has already worked with so much profit to man, and with such glorious testimony to the manifold wisdom of God. That the view now given of the word "beginning" is in strict accordance with Scripture might be very fully illustrated. But this would be out of place here. Nor is this the place to defend the "Confession;" though it might be shown that, in signing the formula, an office-bearer does not commit himself to any unscrip-

tural *doctrine* of creation. These matters are referred to, because for a few months they bulked largely in Sir James's view, and because I am, above all things, anxious that this Memoir should be a full, fair, and faithful record of his opinions and principles.

Sir James continued to watch, with great and earnest interest, the attitude of leading surgeons to Acupressure. Believing that by its use the operator was likely to get complete primary union of the cut vessels more frequently than by the ligature, and that suppuration and sloughing would not supervene, he looked closely into every expedient to obtain such results with the use of the ligature. In a communication to the *Lancet* (September 21, 1867), Professor Lister had shown, that accepting as true the theory of the decomposition of the injured parts in amputations by the germination in the wounds of infusorial or fungoid particles, held to float everywhere, in vast numbers, in the atmosphere, this may be prevented, without excluding the air, "by applying as a dressing some material capable of destroying the life of" these organisms. "The material which I have employed," he says, "is carbolic or phenic acid, a volatile organic compound which appears to exercise a peculiarly destructive influence on low forms of life." In the *Lancet* of November 2, 1867, Sir James reviewed this communication in the form of a "Note on the History of Carbolic Acid and its Compounds in Surgery prior to 1867."

This "Note" shows Sir James's jealousy of everything that seemed fitted to set aside what he held to be useful, or calculated to bring blessing to man. Nothing, he thought, should be tolerated whose tendency was to continue the use of the ligature in amputations, after the superiority of acupressure had, as he believed, been established. It should be remembered, however, that comparatively few operating surgeons agreed with Sir James on this point. Nor did it detract from Professor Lister's merit, in using carbolic acid successfully in compound fractures, suppurations, and abscesses,

or in dressing wounds, to show that he had been anticipated in such cases by foreign operators.

On the 2d of November the Right Hon. Robert Lowe, M.P., opened the Winter Session of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, when he delivered a lecture on primary and classical education in its relation to the State. The lecture was one of great power and wide sweep. Its burden was, that instruction in the classics and in ancient history is valueless for the intellectual and practical requirements of the present day. He preferred modern languages and natural science. This question had long engaged Sir James's attention. Months previously to Mr. Lowe's visit, he had agreed to lecture at Granton, near Edinburgh. In the programme of the Winter Course the title of the lecture was thus intimated—"Modern and Ancient Languages." His time was so fully occupied that he could not prepare it till the day on which it was due. Yet this lecture appeared to the large audience to have been prepared with great deliberation and care. The newspaper report conveys a similar impression :—

"Sir James Simpson apologized for his many absences as President, and added he would certainly not have been there had he known, before the programme of the lectures was printed, that Mr. Lowe was to speak in Edinburgh on much the same subject; but he wished to say that he had no intention of comparing himself in the least with that honourable gentleman on such a theme any more than he would compare a cockle-boat with a majestic man-of-war. He might, however, say that the opinions he was about to offer were those he had publicly offered and defended in Edinburgh more than once before. . . . They had no evidence that there was any special aptitude in particular nations of Europe for acquiring languages more easily than others, but many of them taught their children languages far better than others. Ten, or twelve, or more years of the lives of our children were devoted to education; and the education hitherto had principally consisted in acquiring

a full knowledge of languages. Now, the problem which was stirring up men's minds at present was what was the best way of spending these golden years of life devoted to education? All were agreed that they must go through such elementary subjects as the three R's; and all were agreed among physicians that the young should be taught in such a way as was good for their health. He thought it was grievously wrong to see children enslaved with long lessons at night, as well as long lessons at school during the day. For real proficiency, the quality and accuracy of the lessons were infinitely more important than their quantity. Many were spending more time in mental work than the Government allowed factory children to spend in muscular work. This mental work was much harder than the other, and often produced diseases which were permanent from that time forward. They should aim at bringing up their children highly developed representatives of humanity, both as regarded body and mind. Seeing that most of the ten, twelve, or more years were spent in acquiring a knowledge of our own and other languages, they had to consider what languages should be taught in addition to English. Should we teach our children the languages of our neighbours—languages throbbing with life and activity—modern tongues—or should we teach them old languages, the languages of Greece and Rome spoken by extinct nations twenty centuries ago—dead languages which no human being now spoke? At present in many of the schools—of England particularly—these dead languages were alone taught, and no modern languages except our own, and that often most imperfectly. . . . With regard to Greek, it was true that its importance would always be recognised, particularly by those who followed the clerical profession; for it was the original language of the greatest book that had ever been gifted to man—the New Testament. It was the language, also, of many of the early Fathers and of the earliest Church Councils. The Latin, again, after the Roman Empire ceased, remained still the language of

the Romish Church. Down to mediæval times, and comparatively lately, it was the language also of science; but he did not think they were likely to have a book of science written again in Latin. It was long, also, the chief colloquial language of learned men throughout Europe; but that was ending or ended, because each nation had begun to pronounce it in their own way, and they were not understood by each other. . . . There were illustrious instances among our fellow-countrymen, past and present, who had been able to speak English well without Latin and Greek. Perhaps the most accomplished orator of the day—the greatest speaker of English in the House of Commons—was a gentleman who had, he believed, very little Latin, and no Greek—he meant Mr. Bright. Then, Mr. Cobden got no Latin and no Greek, and still there were few better speakers of English than he was. Mr. Cobden, when a young apprentice, used to get up at five o'clock in the morning for linguistic studies, but the language he learned was French; and it was through his power in that language that he was enabled afterwards to make treaties with France, go to Russia and elsewhere, and diffuse free-trade opinions. He believed, if Mr. Cobden had spoken in Latin instead of French to his Russian audiences, he would not have got more than half a dozen persons to listen to him. Two of the greatest orators of the United States—Mr. Clay, and Mr. Andrew Douglas—were without classical education. It had been said that the advantages of a knowledge of the classics applied more to writing than speaking. But that would exclude all ladies from authorship; although he had been told by a gentleman well acquainted with the magazine literature of the day, that one half of it was written by those of the female sex who never learned Latin and Greek. Among eminent authoresses, who did not acknowledge the necessity of Greek and Latin in order to write English, he mentioned Mrs. Oliphant, Mrs. Gaskell, Mrs. H. Wood, Mrs. Beecher Stowe, Miss Strickland, Miss Martineau, Mrs. Somerville, etc.: and he noticed one example of a lady getting £7000 for one

novel, which was far more than Sir Walter Scott got for any of his. Then there were Hugh Miller, Burns, Hogg, Dickens, Douglas Jerrold, Mark Lemon, Alexander Smith a gentleman who used to astonish them by the purity of his English, and many others—all without classical education. It was said that the use of Latin and Greek was to impart the highest kind of taste and imagination; but had they not the highest type of taste and imagination developed in the works of Bunyan and Shakespeare? Yet Bunyan was not a classical scholar; and it was doubtful whether Shakespeare had any such knowledge. . . . If they were to study Greek and Latin because they were the origin and foundation of some words, far more were they bound to study Anglo-Saxon, because it was the foundation of an immensely greater number of English words. There were other tongues they would also require to study. Let them look, for example, at the names of the rivers and places and islands lying around them. . . . But the question was—Was it a profitable history? He was afraid it was not. He thought it was the worst study that could be put into the hands of boys. Virtue in these times did not mean, as it did now, moral virtue in the highest sense of the word, but brute courage and nothing more. In a book recently published by Professor Döllinger of Munich, they would find such a dreadful description of the seething sea of demoralization which prevailed in ancient Greece and Rome as to make one turn away in disgust. And yet we put the very books from which such facts are drawn into the hands of our children—Horace, Ovid, Martial, Juvenal, etc. He once asked a gentleman, who was at the head of the Law here, what he would do with them if they had been originally published in England. He replied that he would have been obliged, he feared, to stop their sale as obscene. If mothers knew the improprieties in some of the works that were put into their children's hands as text-books and prizes they would rise in rebellion. Then, as to the study of Greek and Latin Grammar, he said that while it was of

great use to those who went to the very depths of linguistic acquirements, there were Latin and even English grammars put into the hands of the young that were utterly repulsive. . . . It was said that Latin and Greek were the best means of training the mind ; but he thought, on the contrary, that they tended to make the mind stunted and deformed, instead of developing it. They cultivated memory chiefly, and left uncultivated the higher powers of observation, so necessary for science and after life. They expended their powers on words and names invented by man, instead of the works and wonders of God, as seen in physiology, botany, geology, chemistry, etc. He read Mr. Faraday's strong evidence that such studies give the growing mind an incapacity to appreciate and follow the higher studies of nature's laws and the knowledge of things. Was the system at present followed not owing to a kind of mediæval nightmare that was brooding over us, or a great national insanity ? He thought that all would allow there were great and grave reasons why our children should be educated in some of the modern languages, such as French and German. The men who were to be devoted to commerce, would find it of much more advantage to be acquainted with these languages as spoken to-day, than with those spoken two thousand years ago."

This lecture was much criticised at the time. Later, it was used for political purposes, and adduced by opponents in proof of bold assertions, that Sir James's bitter opposition to classical instruction unfitted him to hold high official position in a University in whose Arts curriculum the study of the classics has ever held an important place. But this was a misrepresentation of his views. What he found fault with, was not the study of the classics, but the prevailing practice of making every boy spend ten or twelve years in the study of Greek and Latin, to the neglect of branches better fitted to prepare a youth for, say, mercantile and engineering pursuits. He wished to see our great public schools remodelled and conducted, so that—

1. Classics should not be imperative on all, but taught to the highest point to all whose tastes or pursuits render it desirable or necessary. 2. Modern languages should be imperative on all, and be taught both as the classics now are and conversationally. 3. Natural Science should have pre-eminence assigned to it, by demanding a knowledge of one branch at least from every pupil, before he is sent into work where such information is peculiarly valuable. Since Mr. Lowe's visit, and since Sir James's views were made public, much attention has been devoted to these matters, and some improvements introduced in the arrangements of classes and studies in our great educational institutions.

Sir James's eldest surviving son, Walter, was now a student at Cambridge. The following letter shows how keenly he had begun to feel the responsibilities that the Baronetcy had brought with it. The matters referred to were not so bad as, at the time, they seemed to be:—

"*December 8th*, 1867.

"My own dear Wattie,—Most likely I shall run to Crumpsall to-morrow night, or next night. Will this be too soon for you to leave for Manchester? I am in great distress, for —— and Co. hold that I am legally co-purchaser of the —— Works, though I repudiated the purchase weeks ago. They threaten, and will, I believe, take law-steps in the matter. . . . If they have power to compel the sale, which I doubt, I must just try and make the best of it, or sell the whole again at a further loss. You cannot easily imagine the pain I have felt for weeks past, and this has aggravated it all, as the idea comes burning back on me by night and by day—that I have used you so ill, by squandering thus the money which I should have collected for you, as my heir. Often I wish I could unbaronet myself. But you must make your own fortune. I know you will forgive me, but I cannot easily forgive myself. I hope you are *quite* well again. Magnus does enjoy exquisitely the companionship of his deer-hound pup. He, Eve, and Mrs.

Blyth are down at Trinity. Mamma is not very well.—Ever affectionately yours, J. Y. SIMPSON."

Immediately after receiving this letter, Walter wrote as follows:—

"*Tuesday.*

"MY VERY DEAR FATHER,—I am beyond measure sorry to hear that you are having and giving yourself so much anxiety and trouble. All this is very harassing to you, of course, from the trouble it gives; but surely, my dear father, you exaggerate the importance of the loss. If you did not take it so to heart, it would not cost *me* two minutes' thought.

"I cannot see that this Baronetcy makes such a difference, and, leaving it out of the question, you would, a few years ago, have thought as little of it as I do now. Besides, under the worst phase, it will not make you poor, and if it did, and if I don't make money ever myself (as I hope to do), the fact of a Baronetcy in the distant future won't make my position more or less endurable. You used, far from desiring to get money, to say that you did not wish to leave your children a competency, but only enough to give them a start. This will not be a loss sufficient to deprive me of a competency, and if it were, what matter?

"If I were offered a Baronetcy and £5000, or no Baronetcy and £50,000, I should prefer the former.

"You can't help making some money in your profession, but there is no real reason for thinking more of it than you used. I don't undervalue wealth, but (don't think me forward) you are surely over-valuing it. Are you not running to the other extreme? Your real sphere is to do good and get *κῦδος!*

"I suppose you got my letter on Monday, saying I could not leave this week. If you have not yet gone to Manchester, perhaps we may arrange, if necessary, to meet in Manchester. I am free on or after Saturday.

"Write or telegraph *before that* if you wish me to meet you. —With much love, yours affectionately, W. G. Simpson.

"I shall be ready to argue the subject of your letter in a pig-headed way when we meet! W. G. S."

In his work on "Archaic Sculpturings," Sir James, after describing the sculptures at New Grange, Ireland, says:— "Several of the stones in this pyramid-like tomb have round cuttings upon them" (p. 75). Regarded in the light of the context, this expression led to a sharp controversy. At a meeting of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, in the middle of December 1867, Professor C. Piazzi Smyth read a paper on "The Antiquity of Intellectual Man, from a Practical and Astronomical point of View," in which he reviewed and sharply criticised the opinion of Sir James. The paper in reply supplies a good illustration of the earnest and thorough way in which Sir James grappled with a subject comparatively new to him. His first task was to read all that Professor Smyth had written on the subject, and then to become acquainted with every other work on it, so far as time and opportunity would allow. In the outset he justifies his use of the word pyramid by quotations from Col. Pownall, Dr. Daniel Wilson, Mr. Burton, Sir John Lubbock, Sir W. Wilde, and others. The rest of the paper is, for the most part, a comment on the strong points in Professor Smyth's works. As he proceeded, the subject grew in interest. "It is almost fascinating," he said. "There are some most curious points. When I first ran over Smyth's works, I had an impression he was wrong. Now I am convinced he is." Even if we regard Sir James's communication from the lowest point of view—the fruit of "reading up"—it is impossible not to admire the wealth of information brought to the defence of his positions, and the keen edge put on the weapons used. I heard the papers read, and the reply in each case. And, though inclined to give more weight to Professor Smyth's views than Sir James was, and

dissenting from Sir James's estimate of the age of the buildings he associated with the pyramids, I felt, as many more did, that he had the advantage in the discussion.[1]

The paper on the Pyramid of Ghizeh got his earnest attention during the very brief period he gave to its composition. But he had other work on hand. Having noticed the virulence —apparently increasing periodically—of recent cases of smallpox, he was devoting much consideration to the subject. Might not Dr. Jenner's discovery be helped by treating this loathsome disease as rinderpest had been? Might not smallpox be stamped out? In a communication to the *Medical Times*, Sir James proposed that measures should at once be taken to stamp out both smallpox and other contagious diseases, as, for instance, scarlatina, measles, etc. By the wide circulation of this paper, in a pamphlet form, public attention was called to the subject. It proved seasonable. Four years later, when the disease broke out in Edinburgh and elsewhere with great and deadly power, earnest efforts were made to good purpose for carrying out his suggestions.

Sir David Brewster died in February 1868, and Sir James was asked, by the Council of the Royal Society, to move a resolution of admiration for his genius and regret for his loss. This he did at a meeting of the Society on the evening of February 17th, in terms very graphic and touching. "It happens," he said, "that I was the last Fellow of the Royal Society who conversed with Sir David Brewster before his death. Specially, I believe, on this account I have been requested by the Council to move a minute with reference to him. Most willingly do I comply with that request. . . . Perhaps the Society will kindly bear with me while I venture to add to these resolutions a very few remarks. . . . His self-imposed task only ended with his life. And on the subject it seems to me that I carry almost a mission from him to us—from the dead to the living; for when I last visited him at Allerly, when he was within a

[1] See Sir James's *Archæological Essays*, vol. i. p. 219.

few hours of death, when he was already pulseless, his mind was perfectly entire, and perfectly composed; and on asking him, among other matters, if he wished any particular scientific friend to take charge of his remaining scientific papers and notes, he answered me, 'No; I have done what every scientific man should do—viz., published almost all my observations of any value, just as they have occurred.' He then explained that he had left one paper on 'Films' for the Society, and went on to express an earnest regret that he had not had time to write to the Society another description of the optical phenomena, which he had latterly observed in his own field of vision, where there was a partial degree of increasing amaurosis, which, he thought, might be yet found a common form of failure in the eyes of the aged. . . . Then let me say further in relation to him as a philosopher, that his death has broken several curious links with the past. For example, as I was told when down in that part of the country, he was the last of the stars that forty years ago dwelt on the banks of the Tweed, and formed the constellation of friends that clustered there round the Great Wizard of the North at Abbotsford. In the first years of this century—1802-1803—he was much with Cavendish, connecting us thus with the grand band of philosophers who lived in the metropolis of England. Married to a daughter of Macpherson, he connected us with the time, more than a hundred years ago, when Johnson, Blair, Home, and others, disputed so acrimoniously as to whether Ossian's poems were true or not. . . . Sir David Brewster must have been originally endowed with a robust and iron constitution. Few men ever reached the age of eighty-seven with an intellect so unimpaired and an ear so acute. In later years, however, he had repeated attacks of serious illness. But since he attended the meeting of the British Association at Dundee in autumn last, where he was carried out from one of its crowded meetings in a state of syncope, his health has rapidly declined. He died, ultimately, of an attack of pneumonia and bronchitis.

A rigor, ushering in the fatal illness, occurred eight days previous to death. From the date of its occurrence he felt and stated that the grasp of the hand of death was now fixed upon him. Yet, though feeble and weak, he insisted on being allowed to rise and work for a few hours daily. Three days before he died, he insisted on dressing and going into his study, where he dictated several farewell letters, and amongst others, one to our secretary, Dr. Balfour. 'Permit me,' he pleaded with those around him, 'permit me to rise once more, for I have work to do.' 'I know,' he added, 'it is the last time I shall ever be in my study.' Towards the end of that day's work his friend and pastor, Mr. Cousin, visited him. 'My race,' said he to Mr. Cousin, 'is now quite run. I am now no longer of use either to myself or to others, and I have no wish to linger longer here.' 'Yet,' he added after a while,—'yet it is not without a wrench that one parts from all those he has loved so dearly.' To Mr. Phin, and other clerical friends, he freely expressed in these his last days the unbounded and undoubting faith of a very humble and very happy Christian. No shadow of dubiety ever once seemed to cloud his mind. Like my former dear friend and old school companion, Professor John Reid, he seemed to be impressed with the idea, that one of the great joys and glories of heaven would consist in the revelation of all the marvels and mysteries of creation and science, by Him by whom 'all things were made,' and who, as Professor George Wilson held, was not only the Head of the Church, but the Head and origin and source of all science. 'I have,' he remarked to me, 'been infinitely happy here; but I soon shall be infinitely happier with my Saviour and Creator.' . . . . His deathbed was indeed a sermon of unapproachable eloquence and pathos. For there lay this grand and gifted old philosopher, this hoary, loving votary, and arch-priest of science passing fearlessly through the valley of death, sustained and gladdened with the all-simple and all-sufficient faith of a very child, and looking forward with unclouded intellect and

bright and happy prospects to the mighty change that was about to carry him from time to eternity. . . . In his life he has shown us what a gifted and gigantic intellect can effect, when conjoined with industry and energy, in the way of unveiling and unfolding the secret laws and phenomena of nature. In his death he has shown us that one possessing an intellect so gifted and so gigantic could possess and lean upon the faith of a pure and simple-hearted Christian. That faith made to him the dreaded darkness of the valley of death a serene scene of beauty and brightness. May God grant that it do so to every one of us! His spirit even now seems to me to be beckoning on the votaries of literature and science, here and elsewhere, along that path which he has so gloriously trode, upwards and heavenwards and Christwards."

On the evening of March 27 a conversazione was held in Surgeons' Hall, on the invitation of Professor Spence, the President, and the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, when Sir James delivered a lecture on Anæsthetics. The hall was crowded. The lecture was chiefly a re-statement of the strong points in the history of the discovery of anæsthetic agents. At the close Lord Deas proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer in a very happy and hearty way. ". . . It is very interesting and curious to hear how the secrets of nature have been to some extent known and used from time to time, but still kept to a great extent as secrets by practitioners for their own selfish purposes, till they came into the hands of the gentleman who has just addressed us—one who, unlike most magicians, has not only discovered these secrets, but has done what is a true test of genius—brought these appliances, which had formerly been misused, to bear on his fellow-creatures, and done his utmost to spread the knowledge of them not only throughout the length and breadth of this country of Great Britain, but over the whole of Europe and of the civilized world. I cannot conceive of a greater gratification to any man than the reflection which Sir James Simpson must have in his

own mind, that at this very date the remedies which he had alluded to are used to the extent and with the effect to which he has referred—from the rising to the setting of the sun. And I cannot conceive of any greater debt of gratitude that could be owed to any man than that which we owe to Sir James Simpson. . . ."

The following note indicates the high estimate in which Sir James's last important contribution to Archæology was held by one of the most accomplished of the Scandinavian antiquaries, Professor Sven Nilsson of Lund:—

"Lund, Suède, 1 *Avril* 1868.

"Monsieur le Baronnet,—Après que je me suis longtemps occupé d'autres recherches, j'ai nouvellement repris, pour objet de mes études, l'âge du bronze dans le nord et l'ouest de l'Europe, et par conséquent j'ai relu votre admirable ouvrage sur 'Archaic Sculpturings' dont vous avez eu la bonté de m'envoyer une magnifique copie, qui actuellement fait un des plus grands ornements dans ma belle bibliothèque.

"Je l'ai relu, comme j'ai déjà dit, et avec la plus grande reconnaissance, tant pour les renseignements dont vous avez enrichi cette matière si difficile à résoudre, que pour la bonté et l'humanité avec laquelle vous avez jugé de mes essais, et aussi pour le don si précieux dont vous avez bien voulu m'honorer.

"Dans votre livre que j'ai relu avec un plaisir tout particulier, je trouve une riche source de preuves de l'existence du fer dans les temps les plus reculés, et j'avoue franchement que de toutes les oppositions, que j'ai reçues à mes vues que le Bronze du Nord est d'origine phœnicienne, sont celles que vous avez alléguées dans plusieurs passages de votre charmant ouvrage—et c'est pour moi une preuve encore que l'âge du Bronze est plus ancien dans le Nord que l'on souvent s'est imaginé.

"Dans un traité que j'ai sous la main j'ai essayé de frayer

une nouvelle voie de recherche sur le même sujet, et sans le moindre effort j'ai arrivé au même but.

"Peut-être que je publie ce petit traité dans le congrès à Norwich, où j'ai l'intention de me rendre. Ce serait pour moi une grande jouissance de vous y voir. Peut-être puis-je l'espérer?

En tout cas je vous prie d'orner, à l'occasion, mon album de votre photographie, en échange de la mienne, que j'aurai l'honneur de vous envoyer.

"Soyez persuadé de la haute estime et la sincère considération avec la quelle je suis votre tout dévoué,

"S. NILSSON."

To his late assistant, Dr. J. Watt Black, then on a visit to the Medical School of Vienna, he wrote:—

"52 QUEEN STREET, EDINBURGH, 6*th April* 1868.

"MY DEAR DR. BLACK,—I cannot tell you how happy I was to get your Vienna letter—for I fancied you were ill—or that some misfortune had befallen you. Mr. Druitt has written you about your letter. It was so very interesting that I gave it to him—for I happened to be in London the day after I received it here.

"Perhaps it may interest Professor Billroth to know that Dr. Pirrie was in Edinburgh last week, and that he told me his cases of excision of the mammæ now amounted to sixteen, eleven of which healed without a *single* drop of pus. He is bringing out a new edition of his book. I hope you have shown Billroth the 'over-stitch' method.

"I have been working very hard in practice, and keeping wonderfully well, but much require a rest. Where are you going next? Can you talk German at all easily? Could I join you anywhere? I am in bed to-day—quite used up.

"Mr. Syme has republished an old pamphlet of Warren's, and is going in, it is said, for sulphuric ether; but he has not tried it yet. An American, Dr. Hewson, has written a capital paper on the mode of closure of arteries in acupressure.

"Last week Wattie passed his Little-go at Cambridge with honours. Willie is happy at farming; Magnus and Eve very good students. Last night Eve went with me and a party to see the low lodging-houses, police-office, etc.

"The public—not myself—have set me forward as a candidate for the Principalship; but I have not yet applied. Professor Christison, Syme, Playfair, etc., all started. But I believe it lies at present between me and Sir A. Grant of Bombay, who will not take it unless he gets the vacant Moral Philosophy Chair also. The time of election is not fixed, *and I will not be greatly disappointed if it does not fall on me.*

"Piazzi Smyth and I had a tussle about the Pyramids. I will send you my paper. In a fortnight he is to be ready at the Royal Society for another fight.—Do write soon, very soon, and believe me, ever affectionately yours,

"J. Y. Simpson."

By the death of Lord Brougham, May 7, 1868, a vacancy occurred in the Chancellorship of the University of Edinburgh. The Chancellor is elected for life by the General Council.[1] Shortly after Lord Brougham's death several gentlemen, Professors and others interested in the prosperity of the University, held a consultation, when it was agreed to form a provisional committee to take some action in electing a successor. The

[1] The University is a Corporation, consisting of a Chancellor, Rector, Principal, Professors, Registered Graduates, and Alumni, and Matriculated Students; and including in the government the University Court, the Senatus Academicus, and the General Council.

The General Council consists of the Chancellor, the Rector, the Principal, and other members of the University Court, the Professors, all Masters of Arts of the University, all Doctors of Medicine of the University, who have, as Matriculated Students of the University, regularly attended classes in any of the Faculties in the University during four complete Sessions, and of all who, within three years of the passing of the Universities (Scotland) Act (Aug. 2, 1858), established that, as Matriculated Students, they had attended the University for four complete Sessions, or for three complete Sessions and a fourth in some other Scottish University—the attendance for at least two of such Sessions having been on classes in the Curriculum of the Faculty of Arts.

names mentioned privately were those of the Duke of Edinburgh, the Duke of Argyll, Earl Russell, and others. At a subsequent meeting this Committee resolved itself into one in favour of the nomination of Mr. Gladstone. Ultimately a large General Committee was formed, composed of members of Council residing in different parts of the country. Sir James was present at a meeting of this Committee, convened in 5 St. Andrew Square, June 1, 1868, and was called by acclamation to the chair. "In opening the proceedings he begged to state to those members of Council who had not been present at their first meeting, that on that occasion they had quietly and considerately discussed the claims of various noblemen and gentlemen to the office of Chancellor. All present, and, he believed, all absent members of Council would have joyfully acquiesced in the nomination of the Duke of Argyll, if his Grace, who had been long Chancellor of the ancient University of St. Andrews, would have allowed himself to be nominated as Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh. . . . The object of the present meeting was to promote the election of Mr. Gladstone for the Chancellorship of the University of Edinburgh, as successor to Lord Brougham. In the right honourable gentleman they had that combination of name, fame, power, and talent which they required in a Chancellor. He was a distinguished author, one of the greatest scholars, greatest orators, greatest legislators, and greatest statesmen living—a man whom they all knew would one day, and that perhaps at a very early day, be Premier of England."[1] Another committee of members of the General Council was formed, with the view of securing the election of Mr. Inglis, the Lord Justice-General. The contest was keen, and gave rise to a good deal of hot discussion. Mr. Inglis was elected.

In the letter to Dr. Black, given above, Sir James alludes to the vacant Principalship of the University. The Principal is the resident head of the College, and President of the Senatus

[1] *Scotsman*, June 2, 1868.

Academicus. His appointment is vested in the Court of Curators—a body consisting of seven members, three of whom are nominated by the University, and four by the Edinburgh Town Council. When the tidings of Sir David Brewster's death reached Edinburgh, the choice of a successor was eagerly canvassed. Had the choice lain with the people of Scotland, Sir James would, no doubt, have been elected by an immense majority. Remarkable unanimity in his favour prevailed throughout the country.

Diverse circumstances had concurred to produce this. It has ever been regarded as a distinctive feature of the Scottish Universities, that they receive on equal terms within their walls and admit to their fostering care the youth of all classes. Their highest prizes and best positions are open to rich and poor alike. In filling up their Chairs, the only legitimate question regarding a candidate has been held to be—"What has he done?" High social position or wealth give no advantages to students as such. Sir James had entered the University poor and unfriended. By the force of talent, cultivated with persistent painstaking, and disciplined and enriched by earnest, continuous toil, he had made his way, in spite of innumerable obstacles, to a Professorship. The Bathgate baker's son had taken his place in the lists with many favoured by fortune, or by circumstances that left them free to pursue learning and science without distraction, yet he had beaten them in the race. Men who by sheer intellectual strength compel even adverse circumstances to become to them upward steps in life's ladder, ever win the hearty esteem of their fellows. If worthy, they are not soon forgotten. All this was strikingly apparent in the present case. Public opinion rallied in Sir James's favour. Non-academical men did not look very closely at the steps by which he had reached distinction. They may even have felt themselves unqualified to form an opinion on the merits. But they believed in the impartiality of learned men, and regarded success as the testimony to deserving talent.

It was also, they thought, to be expected, that a man would regard with special favour the University system under which he had won some of the highest prizes of life. Its features would be sure to be stamped on his own mind; its interests would be to him sacred; and its highest advancement the aim and ambition of his life. Indeed, Sir James never forgot that he was a University man, and he was ever willing to acknowledge his indebtedness to it. Its interests, its fame, its usefulness, were ever more to him than his own standing as one of its Professors. The spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice goes with men into the management and affairs of public institutions, as well as into those of domestic life. This was so in his case. He gave himself heartily to praise his colleagues, when visiting continental Universities. He had much to tell about his own work, but he was silent on this point, and spoke instead of the work done by others. He wished to exalt his University in the eyes of foreign scientific workers. As a Professor he was himself not only one of many; he stood out in the eyes of men, as one of whom all were sure to speak whenever and wherever the University of Edinburgh was mentioned. And Edinburgh itself, as his University city, got his devotion likewise. Had he, when asked to go to London, and begin the work of teacher and practitioner there, consented, an income unequalled in the history of medical practice awaited him. To Edinburgh the rank and the intelligence of many lands looked specially as the place of his residence. "You come from Scotland," said the King of Denmark lately to a friend introduced to his Majesty by Professor Steenstrup. "Yes, Sire, from Edinburgh." "From Edinburgh!" replied the King, "Sir Simpson was of Edinburgh." His name was famous over the civilized world. The learned Societies of every land bore hearty tribute to his greatness. The list of his honours would fill pages. Some of them are given in a note below.[1]

[1] D.C.L. Oxon.; Honorary M.D. of Dublin; formerly President of the Royal College of Physicians, of the Royal Medical, the Royal Physical, the Medico-Chirurgical, and Obstetric Societies of Edinburgh; Honorary Fellow of the

On his appointment to the Professorship, he soon fulfilled the highest expectations of the patrons. His class at once became popular. Students crowded its benches. Many even who had long passed away from college life took tickets for his class, that with him they might survey those new and fresh fields of study into which he led his pupils. By bringing weight of character, scientific attainments, professional breadth of view, and richly varied literary accomplishments, to the illustration of the studies of his special department, he lifted it into a higher position as an important branch of medical science than it had ever held before. He showed, moreover, that the practice of the obstetrician could well harmonize with that of the general physician. It was in the latter capacity indeed that a large number of patients of both sexes waited on him. We have seen that many of his most important contributions to the literature of medical science were in departments outside of the special work of his Chair. By the introduction of chloroform as an anæsthetic, he made his mark on every branch of the medical profession, and laid mankind under a lasting debt of gratitude. The part he took in the movement for medical reform, and the boon he conferred on the Universities by securing to them, at the last moment, and at great personal trouble, some of the best clauses of the Medical Bill under which they now act, have already been narrated. As regards literary and scientific accomplishments, it may be said, without fear of contradiction, that there was no other Scotchman who at the time took hold of and influenced more men of mark, in every rank and profession, than he did. Some anonymous writers indeed caught at his outspoken words on modern education, and

King and Queen's Colleges of Physicians in Ireland ; Laureate of the Imperial Institute of France ; Knight of the Order of St. Olaf of Norway ; Foreign Member of the Academies of Medicine of France, Belgium, and New York ; of the Academy of Science of Sweden ; of the American Philosophical Society ; of the Medical Institute of Egypt ; of the Medical Societies of Constantinople, Athens, Bohemia, Norway, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Ghent, Massachusetts, Lima, Bombay, etc. ; of the Societies of Surgery and Biology of Paris ; Honorary or Corresponding Fellow of the Obstetric Societies of London, Dublin, Leipsic, Berlin, etc. etc. etc.

insinuated that he was opposed to the classics, on the sour-grapes principle—denouncing what he could not appreciate,—but they signally failed to make out a case. Impartial men, who had no electioneering motive to serve, nor selfish end to gain, appreciated the position he had taken up, and began earnestly to carry out his views. Not, however, by throwing classical education overboard, but by assigning to it a place as well defined as that given to modern languages or to natural science. That this was Sir James's point of view is evident from the much-decried Granton lecture itself. Add to all this the fact, that for years he had literally done the hospitalities of Edinburgh to strangers distinguished in Art, in Literature, or in Science. Surely, then, there was no academic honour to which he might aspire that could gracefully be denied him. But circumstances now occurred little in harmony with this view, and little fitted to perpetuate belief in the moral elevation of learning and the impartiality of science.

The Principalship was filled up. Sir James was not elected. The Court of Curators thought it not meet to advance one of the University's worthiest sons to a position for which he was pre-eminently qualified. It seemed to many, that by this act the University lost more than he did, whom the electors thus refused to honour. "It is painful to think that he who was deemed worthy of a tomb in Westminster Abbey was in his lifetime deprived of a well-merited honour, and the University of the glory of his name as Principal." The means by which this result was brought about were, to say the least, of a very extraordinary, if not scandalous, kind. The opposition of some of his colleagues, after hanging for some time in loose particles, got compacted, and ultimately assumed the form of a Memorial, in which they deemed it their duty to inform the Curators, that Sir James's appointment would not be for the advantage of the University. By one method and another the Curators were led to regard this as a threat on the part of the memorialists, that they were prepared to withdraw from the

Senatus in the event of this appointment. Up till this time Sir James had had a majority in the Court of Electors, but in consequence of the attitude assumed by the reclaiming Professors, especially when looked at in the light of other influences that had been working for some time, one of the Curators became alarmed, and withdrew his support from Sir James. His letter intimating this reached Sir James just before morning prayers. He read it, put it away, and conducted family worship calmly, and with an earnestness that greatly impressed some strangers who were present. When they had returned from the library, and had taken their seats at the breakfast-table, he said very quietly, "I have lost the Principalship."

The incident narrated in the following letter sheds still more light on his attitude and state of feeling, in the very heart of one of the most painful occasions of his life :—

"Free Church Manse,
"Newhaven, Edinburgh, 13*th Feb.* 1873.

"My dear Sir,—I am acquainted with many facts and circumstances illustrative of the singularly generous kindness by which Sir James Simpson was distinguished. . . .

"You will recollect the contest for the office of Principal in the University of Edinburgh, and how deeply the feelings of Sir James were interested in the event. The election took place on a Monday, and it was on the Sabbath preceding, between sermons, that one of my people, a fisherman, called on me, stating that his wife was apparently dying, but that she and all her friends were longing most intensely for a consultation with Sir James. I did not know well what to do, for I knew that his mind was likely to be very much harassed, and I shrank from adding to his troubles. But in the urgency of the case I wrote him a note, simply stating that one of the best women in the town was at the point of death, and longed for his help, leaving the matter without another word to himself. The result was that he came down immediately, spent three hours beside his patient, performed, I am told, miracles of skill,

and did not leave her till the crisis was over. She would, I am assured, have died that evening, but she was one of the sincerest mourners at his funeral, and she still lives to bless his memory. After all was over, he went into a friend's house, and threw himself down on a sofa in a state of utter exhaustion. This was the way in which, without hope of fee or reward, and while others were waiting for him able to give him both, that Sir James spent the evening preceding the election. Some will say it was no great matter after all. Why, for that part of it, neither was the cup of cold water which the dying Sir Philip Sydney passed from his own lips to those of a wounded soldier in greater agony than himself. But the incident is recalled whenever his name is mentioned, as adding to the glory of the knight *sans peur et sans reproche*, and the incident I have mentioned in the Newhaven fisherman's house surely gives to Sir James a place beside him in the glorious order of chivalrous generosity.—Believe me, yours most truly,

"JAMES FAIRBAIRN."

There are more than thirty Professors in the Edinburgh University. The Memorial referred to above was signed by twelve. I have conclusive proof before me that two of this number would have acted cordially under Sir James. Two were old antagonists, who had openly and earnestly opposed his election to the Professorship itself. Another of the number erroneously believed that by Sir James's interference he had lost a University Chair; while a sixth had blows still fresh in his memory, most difficult for some to bear—blows that had fallen heavily on a pet theory. Many onlookers thought that this opposition might, with all safety, have been disregarded by the Court of Electors; and most likely it would have been, had not other influences come into active play and lent weight to the memorialists. Whenever it became known that the twelve Professors had deemed it their duty to inform the Curators that Sir James's appointment "would not be for the advantage

of the University," a counter Memorial was presented, signed, in the course of two or three days, by nearly a thousand members of the University Council, praying for the appointment of Sir James in the highest interests of the University. This conclusively showed how strong and decided the convictions of educated men were in his favour. While Sir James was grieved by the attitude assumed by a small band of his colleagues, he freely admitted that they were quite entitled to use legitimate means to secure the triumph of their views. But alongside of these movements there were others that cannot be too severely characterized. One of his colleagues wrote a letter to a member of the Court of Electors assailing Sir James's character. This was handed to the Court, read by its clerk, and returned to the elector, by whom it was destroyed. A gentleman, not connected with the University, went out of his way to meddle with the matter, and sent a letter to another elector, in which grave suspicion of Sir James's moral character, and doubt of the sincerity even of his Christian profession, were expressed. This he felt more keenly than all else, because done by one to whom he was almost a stranger. I shall never forget the expression of unspeakable sadness on his countenance when I called at Sir James's request. "What *can* he mean? Leaving myself out of view, is it not a sin against the Saviour? He has forgotten all 1 John i. ii." When I indicated that perhaps he was taking the matter too seriously, he said, "But you don't know all." He then went over the circumstances. The letter had been most unprovoked. It had been left incidentally at the house of one of the Professors, himself a memorialist, by a youth who had occasion to call there on his way with the letter to the elector to whom it was addressed. Copied, unknown to its author, it was intrusted to another of the memorialists, by whom copies were forwarded for electioneering purposes to other two of the electors. Party zeal, and the determination to win, must have blinded the actors to the true nature of these proceedings. Sir James heard of these com-

munications on the very eve of the election, and at once wrote to the Court of Curators, demanding the postponement of the election that he might have an opportunity of vindicating his character. But in vain. After the election Sir James's friends persuaded him to seek his vindication in another way. I saw him frequently at the time, and can bear testimony to his reluctance to take steps towards this. Ultimately he agreed to leave the matter in the hands of Mr. Pender of Minard, Dr. Alexander Wood, and Mr. Thomas M'Kie, advocate. "But try," said Sir James, "and avoid legal proceedings." It is unnecessary to go into further details. A most searching inquiry was instituted. Those primarily concerned in the fabrication and propagation of the calumnies made a most complete retractation, and individually expressed deep regret. "I beg therefore," says the writer of the letter, "to retract and apologize for using such words, and to express my regret that I ever wrote them. At the same time, I believe that a meaning has been attached to my words by certain persons which they were never intended by me to convey, and that they have been made the ground of insinuations of which I never dreamt. I cannot too strongly disclaim such interpretations, or too deeply regret that I wrote anything which could have led to them. I may be allowed to add, that this matter has caused me no ordinary suffering; that I lament and condemn the use that has been made of my letter, and that I am more distressed than I can tell at the pain which has been given to Sir J. Simpson, and at my having been the occasion, most unintentionally, of unjust imputations on his character."

"When," says the Professor who copied the letter, "I hastily copied and transmitted ——'s letter, I had no idea that it was fitted to convey the imputations to which I refer. . . . I now regret extremely that I was in any way connected with the circulation of ——'s letter, that I have in this way occasioned pain and annoyance to you, and that I have acted in this matter in a manner which may seem at variance with our

friendly relations as colleagues. I have to ask your forgiveness, and to express a hope that the transaction may be forgotten."

"I beg to repeat," wrote the third party to whom reference has been made, "in this form, the explanation which I offered to you in the course of the evidence formerly given before you in this matter—viz., that the statements complained of did not at the time appear to me libellous; and that, therefore, on account of the strong testimony borne in the letter to the qualifications of Sir Alexander Grant for the Principalship of the University, I considered myself warranted in transmitting to two Curators a letter intended for a third, and presenting no indication of being intended for a confidential letter. That had it occurred to me at the time that the letter contained passages which might be construed as of a libellous nature, I should certainly not have been accessory to the communication of it to any one. That I now see that the letter of —— may be read as libellous. That in these circumstances I readily express my regret that I took any part in communicating the letter to any of the Curators."[1]

Such are the leading features of this unworthy work. The high regard I have for some of the parties who inconsiderately lent themselves to it, led me to seek earnestly for grounds that would have justified the omission of any allusion to it here. It was the only great shadow attempted to be cast on the lustre of a bright public career, and had to be noticed. Sir James was satisfied with the retractation and apology of those who had caused it, and heartily forgave them. His attitude throughout the whole of these transactions won the admiration of all who shared his confidence. It impressed me much at the time, but my admiration of his bearing has been deepened while carefully

[1] A full statement of the case was printed at the time; but Sir James, seeing how injurious it would be to these parties, refused to sanction its publication. Should, however, an attempt be made at any time to dissociate his loss of the Principalship from these misrepresentations it would be necessary to publish this document.

tracing again the history of the affair. Proofs are abundant of his generosity, his willingness to forgive imputation of crooked motives, and chiefly of his dread lest Christianity should be held responsible for the unchristian acts of any of its disciples. But I cannot pass away from the subject without another remark. It seems to me that some of Sir James's friends let their zeal outrun discretion, and imported questions into the candidateship which, to say the least, were not legitimate. The English Universities, "farthest Ind," professional and even commercial circles, were applied to for information foreign to the affair. Sir James Simpson was not one

> "—— who hopes (his neighbour's worth deprest)
> Pre-eminence himself; and covets hence,
> For his own greatness, 'that another fall.'"

But, indeed, there was on both sides not a little of that busybodyism which, on such occasions, often works much mischief among friends.

CHAPTER XV.

Graduation Address, 1st August 1868—Freedom of the City—Speech of Lord Provost Chambers—Sir James's Reply—Public Religious Work—Mr. Spurgeon—Hospital Reform—Statistics of Amputations—Visit to Rome—"Puck"—Dogs and Children—Home Affections—Idea of a Holiday—Hospitalism—Letter to Walter—Note on Chloral—Anæsthesia—Dr. H. Storer—Medical and Archæological Works—Witness in a Divorce Case—Visit to Dr. Williams at York—Letter to Magnus—Illness—Notes of Sick-room Experiences by Mr. R. R. Simpson—Death.

When the new Principal entered on office, Sir James recognised the situation with cheerful grace, and prepared to act under him for the interests of the University. It fell to him to deliver the Medical Graduation Address on the 1st of August 1868. Though fresh from the circumstances narrated above, no trace of bitterness or of disappointment marred the address, and no word fell from his lips that could possibly have been held to point to the keen and painful contest out of which he had so recently come. He spoke with great freedom and earnestness, and in that hopeful spirit which ever fixes the attention of the young. He sketched the young physician's work and temptations, indicated what motives should guide him, referred to facts in the history of the profession illustrative of his remarks, and closed with a weighty and most earnest appeal:—

"But it is more than time that these rambling remarks should be drawing to a close, for I dare detain you no longer. Your chains of pupillage are already severed and falling off for ever. Pardon me, however, if I venture to add one or two remarks

more ere we part, and part never all to meet together again, on earth at least. I have incidentally spoken to you of an American physician, the celebrated Dr. Rush, who graduated in this University exactly one hundred years ago, when Professors Munro the second and Joseph Black, William Cullen and John Gregory and Francis Home were members of the Medical Faculty. Where—where are they and their armies of enthusiastic pupils? No one who was present at that graduation is alive now. Fifty years hence very few of you assembled here this day will be still living; a hundred years hence, and all these bodies of ours will be dead and decomposed. For we are all labelled and ticketed 'for the grave'—some, perhaps, to reach it very soon, and others, later, and later, till all are gone, and gathered to our mother earth, and dust to dust, ashes to ashes. Amid our greatest pleasures, and in days even of just joy and rational rejoicing like this, we are constantly reminded of the shortness of our sojourn here. 'Life is short, and the art long'—*ὁ βίος βραχὺς, ἡ δὲ τέχνη μακρὴ*—so wrote the Father of Medicine upwards of 2000 years ago. . . .

"At that solemn hour, as we cross the river of death, may He by whom 'all things were made,' lead and protect and sustain you by the might of His hand;—that hand which hung up the sun in the firmament—which spun the planets and stars on their courses—which created this bright and beautiful physical world—and which, in human form, was nailed up to the cross of Calvary to ransom back the dark and desolate moral world, and atone for man's transgressions. May the infinitude of that Saviour's love guard and claim you then—and now—and always."

Towards the close of the same month he received the following communication from the Lord Provost of Edinburgh :—

"City Chambers, Edinburgh, 25*th August* 1868.

"My dear Sir James,—I have the honour to inform you that on the 4th inst. the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council

unanimously adopted the following resolution, which has since been duly confirmed:—'That the Freedom of the City be conferred on Sir James Young Simpson of Strathavon, Bart., M.D., D.C.L., Professor of Midwifery in the University of Edinburgh, whose numerous and varied contributions to Medical Science and to Literature, and particularly whose distinguished discoveries and appliances for the alleviation of human suffering, have served to maintain and extend the reputation of the City and its Medical School, and entitle him to the respect and gratitude of his fellow-citizens.'

"It will be a gratification to the Corporation if you can make it convenient to receive the Burgess-ticket in person, and I shall be glad to arrange for this at such time as may suit your convenience.—I have the honour to be, my dear Sir James, yours faithfully, W. CHAMBERS, *Lord Provost.*"

Later, the Lord Provost wrote:—

"CITY CHAMBERS, EDINBURGH, *Sept. 7th*, 1868.

"MY DEAR SIR JAMES,—I find that Lord Napier of Magdala is likely to receive the freedom of the city some day next week. I hope it will be convenient for you to receive the freedom at the same time; and if so, that you will be at hand. I hope to be able to fix the day and hour by Wednesday afternoon. Yours truly, W. CHAMBERS, *Lord Provost.*"

To this note Sir James replied:—

"52 QUEEN STREET, EDINBURGH.

"MY DEAR LORD PROVOST,—Several days ago I wrote and spoke to your Lordship as to the question of my receiving the citizenship of Edinburgh on the same day and on the same occasion with Lord Napier of Magdala. The more I have thought on the matter, the more have I felt convinced in my original idea that it would be wrong in me to presume to appear alongside of Lord Napier. All the inhabitants of Edinburgh are, I believe, anxious that the fullest honour should be paid to

Lord Napier that they possibly can pay; and in this feeling I most heartily concur. J. Y. S."

The presentation of the freedom of the City took place about a year after. The ceremony was witnessed by a large assemblage of ladies and gentlemen.

In the course of an able and laudatory address, the Lord Provost said :—"We are proud indeed to know that we possess in the city of Edinburgh a gentleman like yourself, whose reputation is not confined to Scotland, but who is known over the whole civilized world—known as well on the banks of the Thames and the Seine as on the shores of the Firth of Forth. It is no small matter of pride to us to think that we have been able to retain you in our ancient city. Alas! almost all our men of genius are drawn away by the greater metropolis of the South; and we feel gratified to think that you have found here a suitable and proper sphere for your great and valuable services. I will not dwell on what you have accomplished in medical science. I will only allude to your discovery—the greatest of all discoveries in modern times—of the application of Chloroform in the assuagement of human suffering. That was a great gift to mankind at large, and it well befits us, the Corporation of Edinburgh, to mark our sense of the great act of beneficence on your part by this small compliment. I could also allude, did time permit, to your distinguished service in the discovery of Acupressure, by which hæmorrhage is rapidly and safely stopped, and, of course, many lives are saved. This is a subject on which medical men are very much more qualified to speak than myself, but we do possess at least the general appreciation of its great value, which enables us to say that we are proud to have a man amongst us capable of rendering such service to humanity. I might allude also to your remarkable success in the pursuit of archæological and antiquarian researches, to your wonderful investigations into the medical practices of ancient times, and into the antiquities of

our own country. In that field alone you might have achieved a most distinguished reputation. However, it is more as a medical man that we address you to-day. You have raised the reputation of the University of Edinburgh and of its Professors, who may well be proud to think they have among them a man so distinguished and so eminent. You have ever been the friend of sanitary improvement. . . ."

In his reply Sir James referred to his first arrival in Edinburgh, forty years before. He spoke of his student life, of his first attempts to get into a position in which he might turn his medical knowledge to practical account, of his failure as a candidate for the office of a village surgeon, and of his elder brother's generous and self-sacrificing help. "I came to settle down a citizen of Edinburgh, and fight among you a hard and up-hill battle of life, for bread, and name, and fame, and the fact that I stand here before you this day so far testifies that in this arduous struggle I have—won. Some seven or eight years after my graduation, and in this very room, all the fortune and destiny of my future life were one forenoon swayed and settled by a vote of the Town Council of Edinburgh, when they elected me Professor of Midwifery in the University. . . . On the day of election one of the patrons eagerly argued in this hall that if I were chosen as Dr. Hamilton's successor the hotel-keepers, merchants, and others in the city would have good reason to complain, as I could never be expected like him to induce patients to come occasionally from a distance to our city. But I think this prophetical objection has been even more fully gainsaid than the other; for I believe I have had the good fortune to draw towards our beloved and romantic town more strangers than ever sought it before for mere health's sake; and that, too, from most parts of the globe—from America and Australia, from Asia and Africa, and from the various kingdoms of Europe. Your Lordship has alluded, in too flattering terms, to some of the professional and other work which I have been permitted to do in the course of my pro-

fessional life. I only wish my deserts were more worthy of your kind eulogy. For sometimes when I look back and reflect, I feel regret and dismay that my avocations and my idleness have prevented me from doing more for the promotion of a science and art which, like medicine, calls aloud for so much devotion and study from its followers and votaries."

After referring to chloroform and acupressure, he adds:—"It has been often, however, adduced as a sage and sound remark, that a man may sometimes see, as in a mirror, a forecast of the relative esteem in which his works and writings will be eventually held by future generations, by looking at the relative estimation in which he and they are held in his own day by foreigners, and by foreign nations and foreign schools, who, unbiassed by personality, reduce all objects at once to their just proportions and true value. If I dared to risk such a test, I should have some reason to hope that what little I have done in my profession may yet perhaps enable me to leave some slight 'footprints on the sands of time'—for I have had, I believe, more foreign academic honours and distinctions accorded to me than have fallen to the lot of most of my medical contemporaries. For my own part, however, I regard it as a far higher and greater gratification that to-day, and at home—not from the stranger and foreigner, but from you, my own townsmen, who live in the same community with me, and know me personally, and all my outgoings and doings—I have received the honour which you have conferred upon me; and I receive it in the spirit of your Lordship's interpretation of its object—not as a testimony of esteem offered by you to me as a Professor and physician merely, but also as a man. It is specially in this last light that I rejoice in thus standing here before you this day, and accepting from you this casket, which I shall have sincere pride and pleasure in transmitting down to the keeping of my sons."

In the autumn of 1868 Sir James's health was better than it had been for seven years. Abundant in labours—professional,

philanthropic, and archæological—his life was full of heart and hope.[1]

At this period, and later, there were some who thought that his Christian love was not so warm, nor his Christian zeal so earnest, as they had been for some time after his spiritual change. He was seldomer seen at religious meetings, and seldomer engaged in public Christian work. But they forgot that Christianity as a life ever, in natures like his and in cases where there is no official connexion with the public work of the Church, after its first fresh impulses subsides into calm, quiet channels. It was much thus with him. The estimate of his Christianity was to be formed from the healthy influences it was exercising in the social circle, among his patients, and among the strangers from many lands to whom he ever offered the most hearty hospitality. If his voice was not heard in the streets, the influence of his example was owned in more influential quarters. "He that believeth shall not make haste." Some of the Christian friends who knew him best, and rejoiced most sincerely over the gift and grace of Jesus Christ in him, were glad to notice the growing unfrequency of his appearance at great public religious meetings. At such gatherings the harp is too often struck only on one string. The love of God is exalted at the

[1] A straw on the surface will indicate the direction of the current. The following trifle shows how firmly the geniality of earlier years kept its hold of him :—

"Questions and Answers.

"I.—Put on your wishing-cap, and what would you wish for?—The recovery of the idle Past.

"II.—Gather your favourite flower.—Forget-me-not.

"III.—Name your principal tastes.—'Auld nicknackets,' stones, and books, and (tell it not) a cup of tea!

"IV.—What time of year would you prolong?—The New Year.

"V.—Choose a motto.—'Excelsior.'

"VI.—Where is the pleasantest spot in memory?—Any spots where neither bells, messages, letters, nor telegrams can reach me.

"VII.—What do you think the fittest subject for reform?—Ladies' dresses, without a doubt. J. Y. Simpson, M.D.

"Baltimore House, *Sep.* 1868.

"Written in Miss F. M. Colquhoun's album."

expense of His righteousness, and views find expression fitted to beget the belief that the law of God is not part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Many who look to the privileges of the Sabbath, as the means through which they have often got strength for the work of the week, are saying that Christian ordinances are not what they were wont to be. Men speak from the pulpit as if they had come to believe that their hearers had minds but not consciences, while the appeals from the religious platform often seem to indicate, that the speakers have an impression that the audience have consciences but not minds. It is doubtful if Sir James would have escaped this one-sided tendency, had he, with his want of leisure and occasion for systematic study of the Bible, continued to do a tithe even of the public religious work on which he had entered, with so much earnestness and heart, at the time of his change.

In the autumn of 1868 he was brought into close relation with Mr. Spurgeon. "Sir James and Mr. Spurgeon became first acquainted in 1864, at the house of their mutual friend, Mr. William Dickson, York Place, where they were wont to meet on Mr. Spurgeon's successive visits to Edinburgh. Not a little similar in type, physically as well as mentally, an affectionate friendship was quickly the result, and both seemed greatly to enjoy their brief subsequent opportunities of intercourse. On being told, in 1867, of the painful illness of Mrs. S., Sir James, in the kindest and most delicate way, offered, through Mr. Dickson, his professional services in London. 'But, remember,' he characteristically said, 'if I go, it is *as a friend*, and not as a doctor.' The offer was gratefully accepted. Alluding to Sir James's lamented death, Mr. Spurgeon wrote,—'Our friend Sir James has gone over to the majority. It *cannot be wrong*.'"

On the 27th September Mr. Spurgeon wrote to Mr. Dickson: —"I am no small trouble to you, but what can I do? . . . My dear wife grows worse. . . . I wrote to Sir James about a week ago. . . . You will do me a service incalculable and never to be forgotten if you can see our kind friend and get him to appoint a time." Again, on the 7th October,—"My dear Friend,—Let me

live the age of Methuselah, I shall not forget your goodness. The Lord reward you, I cannot. This is to bear one another's burdens, and to fulfil the law of Christ." And again, after Sir James had visited Mrs. Spurgeon:—

"CLAPHAM, *Tuesday*, 1 A.M.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I am writing far into the night to tell friends how my dear wife has sped. That dear angel of mercy, Sir James Simpson, has been very successful, as usual, and the operation is well over; patient, very patient, and in good spirits. If you know 10,000 eloquent men in Scotland, I would give them work for the next hundred years; viz., to praise the Lord for sending to us such a man, so skilful and so noble a doctor."

In the beginning of the session 1868-69 he again took up the subject of Hospital Reform, which had so early and so often exercised his mind. He had long had a strong conviction, that the public accommodation for the diseased was not in harmony with improved methods of treatment, but rather interfered with them. His views on the subject of acupressure had now a strong influence on his investigations. But his methods of work neutralized tendencies to bias against prevalent modes of hospital practice. He generally based his inferences on statistics, published for other purposes than that for which he used them. He simply wished for facts.

TO DR. WATT BLACK.

"52 QUEEN ST., EDINBURGH, 28*th Dec.* 1868.

"MY DEAR DR.,—I had on Saturday morning a talk with —— of Guy's Hospital, when he promised to give me the amputations of the limbs at Guy's during the last seven years —their number and result.

"At the time, I thought that I might obtain returns from the Superintendents or Registrars of St. Bartholomew's, Middlesex, University, King's College, etc., by writing them. But none of their names are in Churchill's Directory, under the staff of these hospitals.

"I wish greatly you would look in at any of these, and ask for any *printed* returns of their cases and operations. Some, like Guy's, publish these annually. They would give us all we want. Or, if they have none published, have they any tables that would fill up such returns as I enclose, and a long list of which I have had now returned to me?

"Please make for me (this week if you can, against our Infirmary *annual* meeting on Monday) inquiries as to *what* London hospitals have obstetric, as well as medical and surgical wards. Guy's and the London have them.

"Do the London hospitals contain, like ours, more surgical than medical patients? Have they lists of their beds?

"I am sorry to trouble you with all this. To-morrow I am going to see a case in Glasgow. I got down well, but very cold. —Yours always, J. Y. Simpson."

He saw that the record which would most truly serve his purpose was that furnished by the acting surgeons of public hospitals for the information of the managers. This he questioned, examined, and cross-examined, with the view of ascertaining the soundness of his own views touching hospital accommodation. Huge hospital edifices in cities he held to be bad, and circumstances determined him at this time to try and convince the public of this. Two methods occurred to him. On the one hand, he might compare the mortality in the great hospitals at present with that, in similar cases, in the older and smaller buildings that preceded them. On the other hand, he might contrast the results of country amputations with those in city hospitals. In either case the advantage, at first sight, might be expected to lie with the city institutions; because it is to be supposed that surgical skill is now far greater than it was in bygone days, and that the arrangements of great hospitals in the centres of wealth and of science would far surpass what could be found in rural districts and in cottage homes. But in all his investigations facts compelled him to conclude otherwise. He took immense labour to obtain the facts which, in

the spring of 1869, he embodied in two elaborate papers on *Hospitalism*. Assuming the operative skill of the practitioners in town and country, in palatial hospital edifice and in lowly cottage home, to be equal, the test came to lie in the influence of the external circumstances and surroundings on the patient. He set himself with his wonted thoroughness of effort and singleness of aim to discover the truth, and here are the results :—

"The total number of limb-amputations collected from private country and provincial practice amounts to 2098. On counting up the limb-amputations collected from eleven large and metropolitan hospitals, the total number happens accidentally to be very nearly the same, for it amounts to 2089.

"The whole collected number operated upon is thus nearly similar in hospital practice and in rural practice. But the results as to the relative number of lives lost in these two types or places of practice is immensely different.

"After the 2098 limb-amputations in the country, 226 of the patients died. After the 2089 limb-amputations in eleven large and metropolitan hospitals, 855 of the patients died.

"The mortality after limb-amputations in the country is thus 1 in 9·2, and after limb-amputations in large and metropolitan hospitals 1 in 2·4. Hence the number that die after these operations in such hospital practice, when compared with rural practice, nearly FOUR TIMES GREATER.

"But the experience of the country surgeon loses—as we have seen—only 1 in every 12·4 of his patients upon whom he performs limb-amputation. Hence the experienced country surgeon operating upon his patients in poor cottages and villages is—as compared with the experienced city surgeon, operating upon his patients in rich and magnificent hospitals —FIVE TIMES MORE SUCCESSFUL.

"In some minor amputations—and hence, I believe, in other minor operations also—the contrast is still more marked between the success of amputation in country practice and in the practice of large hospitals. In country practice, after amputation of the

forearm, 2 died out of 377 cases, or 1 in every 188 operated on. In eleven large and metropolitan hospitals, out of 244 cases of amputation of the forearm, 40 died, or 1 in every 6 operated on. Hence, according to these data, the death-rate in hospital practice was, as compared with the death-rate in rural practice in this individual operation, THIRTY TIMES GREATER.

"The tremendous differences between the two practices may perhaps be more pointedly and simply stated thus :—

Out of 2089 amputations in hospital practice, 855 died;
Out of 2098 amputations in country practice, 226 died;

Giving an excess to hospital practice of 629 *deaths.*

"This excess, in about 2100 limb-amputations, of 629 deaths in hospital practice as compared with rural practice—in our palatial hospitals as compared with our rural villages and cottages—in large wards as compared with isolated rooms—is certainly much greater and more pronounced than I myself expected when I began the present inquiry. But must the calling of this dismal death-roll still go on unchallenged and unchecked? Shall this pitiless and deliberate sacrifice of human life to conditions which are more or less preventable, be continued or arrested? Do not these terrible figures plead eloquently and clamantly for a revision and reform of our existing hospital system?"

These papers were published in pamphlet form, and widely circulated. They were much criticised, but the inferences were not set aside. It was his intention to review these criticisms and to give yet greater prominence to his views. He felt that to carry them out would be an inestimable boon to humanity. Other men saw formidable difficulties to the realization of his plans. He saw none. His fellow-men were to be benefited. The sufferings of the diseased were to be alleviated, and human life to be saved. This was enough. If such blessings were to follow the hospital schemes which he proposed, there must be a way to them. Had his life been

spared it is not unlikely we would, even now, have had his views worked out, at least partially.

These pamphlets contain so much useful information, are so suggestive of aspects of improvement in the sites and surroundings of hospitals, and indicate so emphatically the failure of the very highest skill, where such things are neglected, that they deserve the careful attention of philanthropists.

As the hard work of the winter drew to a close he began to think of a holiday, and ultimately arranged to visit Rome. He had a pleasant run, and was greatly delighted with Rome. The following notice of the visit appeared in the *Scotsman*, April 18:—"A medical correspondent writes us from Rome: 'Our eminent countryman Sir James Simpson, along with his friend Mr. Pender, arrived in the city of the Cæsars on the evening of Monday, 29th ult., and will leave for Florence and home this evening, Monday, 5th inst. His time has been much occupied in visiting the mighty ruins of the Kings, Republic, and Emperors, the antiquities generally, hospitals, sanitary arrangements, and the many other things of ancient and modern Rome which claim attention from a mind like his, so full of knowledge, inquiry, and Christian philanthropy. His short period of recreation here has not been free from professional consultations, and a few even of the Roman nobility have anxiously solicited his advice; nor have any been sent empty away, for to one and all he has acted the part of the Good Samaritan. He visited the Protestant burying-ground—always so silent and sunny; in most instances, it is the last resting-place of strangers; yet few go there who do not stumble on some known family name or friend's friend. Sir James, with characteristic feeling, has given orders to have the grave of John Bell, the celebrated surgeon, anatomist, and author, cleared and dressed up; also that of Keats the poet—both in the old cemetery. Sir James was pleased with the two principal hospitals here—viz., S. Spirito and S. Giacomo. He attended divine service in the Free Church yesterday, where the Rev.

Mr. Dykes is now officiating. Before doing so, he had an opportunity of seeing the Pope, in gala procession, on his way from the Vatican to the Sopra Minerva Church, where high mass was performed, it being the feast of the Annunciation. Sir James has been the guest of Lord Northesk, Captain Beckett, R.N., Mr. M'Bean, banker, Miss Haig (Bemerside), etc.; and, if time had permitted, a public reception would have been given him.'"

In a note to his friend Mrs. Close, Killeny Castle, Ireland, he writes,—"I was rejoiced to learn you were so well, and sorry that 'Pearl' gave Mr. Close and you so much anxiety. But I hope she will grow up a strong young lady. . . . Rome I enjoyed immensely. Some antiquarian friends showed me all the great archæological sights—one of them consisting of various portions of the very wall that Romulus built around the Palatine Hill." He returned home less refreshed and strengthened than he was wont to be after "long scampers."

On the 21st of August he paid a hasty visit to Bathgate. Arriving in the morning, he intended to return home in the afternoon, but during the day a favourite black and tan terrier, belonging to his son William, which had gone with him, went amissing. When the time for starting arrived, "Puck" had not turned up. "We were indebted to the dog," says his brother, "for having him another night in our house. He could not think of leaving without it, and stayed the night with us." It was the last night he was to spend in Bathgate. He spent a happy night with his beloved brother. Bathgate, present and past, was the chief theme of conversation. But ever and anon he interrupted the talk, saying—"I wonder if there are any tidings of Puck?" Immediately on his return home next day he wrote :—

"52 Queen Street, Edinburgh, 22*d Augt.* 1869.

"My dear Sandy,—I shall be very happy to hear that Puck has been found. If not, offer the boys who saw him half-a-crown or a crown if they will find him. I fancy he would try to make his way to the railway station or the Inch. Have they

seen him about the stations or engines? Could he have tried along the road to Edinburgh? If seen, the boys could tempt him with food.

"Would it be worth while to print a bill about him, or advertise in the Bathgate paper?

"Perhaps the police could send a notice of him to Airdrie or Glasgow. If he had come near Edinburgh he would have found his way home. His collar was of faded greenish leather.

"Pray excuse all this trouble, and believe me yours affectionately, J. Y. S.

"*P.S.*—If found, send 'Business' in with him, but he will require a leading-string."

To the great delight of the household, "Puck" arrived at 52 Queen Street a short time after its master, having made a journey of about twenty miles, through a district with which it was wholly unacquainted.

Sir James seldom left a dog unnoticed that came in his way on professional visits. "Good-bye, doggie," was not an unusual remark on leaving the house of a patient, when some canine favourite sought to touch his hand with its tongue, as if grateful for his visit to its mistress. "Children and dogs expected to be made of by him. The child on a sick-bed watched for his coming, and at the sound of his foot would untie its little night-gown, that the great head might listen if there were 'any pigeons cooing inside.' He had a whole dialect of jokes for children. Returning to us one day a manuscript he had corrected, he said, 'I would have put in more stories for children.' . . . On the day of his own heaviest stroke, when his eldest son was pronounced to be dying, an inquirer was admitted to see him, accompanied by a child, who crept overawed into a corner of the room. While his tears were falling fast, he lifted down a book of natural history, and carrying it to the child, he whispered, 'Pretty pictures there.'" [1]

These incidents show some of the deep simplicity and tenderness of his strong nature. His own children early felt their charm,

[1] *Golden Vials Filled: A New-Year's Address.* By M. F. Barbour. 1871.

and yielded to their power. These, and what they saw of his unwearied efforts in behalf of others, formed that attitude of loving but reverent familiarity which marked their intercourse with him as they grew up. "Being," says Sir Walter, "a very busy man, he had not much time to spend in drawing out his children. Consequently, as children, none of us, except perhaps Jessie, were ever inclined to be familiar with him, though at the same time in no way afraid of him. I remember now the pleasure it gave him when she used to interrupt him by climbing up the back of his chair and pulling his hair. Though poring over some writing, or however employed, Jessie's teasings were always successful in drawing him into play for some minutes. If we were anxious to make some purchase, we had no hesitation in asking our mother for the money. The request might be granted or not. In any case there was nothing eventful in making the request. But when a request was to be proffered to my father (and we early discovered that when the contemplated purchase was more than usually costly he was the most likely parent to apply to), there always had to be a good deal of making up of minds before doing so. It was necessary to have arguments as to the reasonableness of the request ready. If these existed, we seldom were refused; but it would have been a humiliation if we had. As we grew up we began to understand and appreciate him, and in several conversations my brother David and I communicated to each other the discovery we had made of 'what a brick' he was, and agreed that his 'brickishness' called for our care in not vexing him.

"Although he often showed how much satisfaction it would give him to have us as young men confide in and consult with him as a friend, sons naturally do not, without an effort, make companions and confidants of their fathers, and him more especially it seemed presumptuous to bother with our trifles, occupied, as he was, so unremittingly with higher matters. But within the last few years, when I did make the effort, I found an untiring and interested listener, entering into my feelings, and ready, without a word of rebuke, to help out of

any scrape. I have confided things to him that very few sons would have cared to tell a father."

In engrossing cares of professional pursuits and public work, or in the excitement of hasteful travel—for all his excursions took the form of a scamper—the home circle was ever on his heart. His frequent letters almost always bore messages to the boys, or notices of persons and places written chiefly for the children: —"My dearest wifie, love and kisses to all. Yours always, J. Y. S." "Kindest love to thee, my own dear, dear Jessie, and to the children one and all, and a fond, fond kiss to each. Yours ever, J. Y. S." "I am going to write to Davie and Walter. Your opinion of our dear little mannie delights me." "In the forenoon I visited the Courts of Law with Dr. Storrar, and saw lots of Judges. Tell Davie we entered the Courts from a hall about 150 feet long, and this hall was built by William Rufus. Ask Walter how old it is. Say to Davie, we saw the spot where King Charles was beheaded." "I have been an hour in the British Museum this morning with Mr. Franks, revelling in some Roman antiquities. I saw Prince Albert yesterday; very kind and gentlemanly; showed me his library, etc.; talked of *Punch*, Scotland, chloroform, etc. I went over the Palace, and was introduced to the Prince of Wales, Prince Alfred, and the two youngest children." When travelling abroad he kept the boys informed of whatever he thought likely to interest them. Writing from Dover, he says, "Tell Davie and Walter I climbed to the top of the cliffs through a spiral staircase, cut out, as a great deep hole, in the substance of the solid chalk." From Paris he writes: "My dear, dear Boys,—Sit you down, and you and I shall have some talk about Paris and its wonders. But I must make one bargain, namely, that while I speak to you, —— is not to pick his nose!" A very graphic description of Paris follows, in which he touches with great skill on points sure to interest them. He concludes: "Everywhere there are men and women keeping peeries dozing, several at a time, and wishing to sell them. They are made of brass (Paris peeries)—capital bummers; I will bring you one

each." "To-morrow morning Dubois gives a lecture ON (as he expresses it) Professor Seempson; and I have to be early up for it." Writing from Strasbourg, he says: "MY DEAR BOYS, —Take up a map and see where I have been since I last wrote you." Then follows a description of the city, its famous steeple, etc. From Heidelberg they are told, "Old Naegele was extremely kind. He would not at first believe I was 'Dr. Simpson,' for he fancied me 'always tall, large, and old.' Ever and anon he marched up to me with, 'Est-il possible?' I chloroformed a patient. On parting he belaboured my cheeks with kisses!" In his notice of Utrecht he says, "They are funnily clean here, washing the front of their houses, etc., to-day (Saturday). It is actually ludicrous. But in one thing they are NOT clean. I mean that abominable smoking. I travelled with a young *lady*, of seventeen or eighteen, who smoked her cigar and crunched a piece of apple alternately. Every man in the Medical Society to-night was enveloped in tobacco-smoke, and busy, busy with his cigar or pipe, unless when actually speaking. To-morrow I expect to see the cows with their tails tied up for cleanliness."

His own idea of a holiday puzzled the young folk. "He said to me one day," says Sir Walter, "that he was very tired, and must have a rest. It was a very hot day, so I proposed going down to Viewbank, where the rest of the family were then staying, and lying on the grass. He said, 'That is no rest. Go down and get Eve, and we will take a *seamper* round the Lakes, and be back to-morrow night.'"

Still working at hospitalism, and watching the steps being taken to rebuild the Royal Infirmary on a new site, he addressed a communication to the *Daily Review* (29th Sept. 1869), in which he called in question the virtues claimed by Professors Syme and Lister for carbolic acid in surgical cases. Then he earnestly pleads "that, in the construction of our new Infirmary, the great disinfectants and antiseptics that we should alone depend upon are abundance of space, abundance of light, and above all, abundance of fresh, pure, and ever-changing air to

every patient and every ward in the hospital—a result that will probably be attained most cheaply and certainly by leaving the present Watson's Hospital, with its numerous class-rooms, bedrooms, etc., for the administrative part of the institution, and erecting upon the ground above and below this central building a series of village or villa hospitals or wards, furnished with all the latest and best sanitary improvements." To his son Walter, then a student at Cambridge, preparing for an examination, he writes :—

"52 Queen Street, Edinburgh, 8*th Dec.* 1869.

"My own dear Walter,—I know you have no time to read a long letter this week; but I cannot help writing to wish you all success in your impending struggle. During the week I shall often think of you and your work. You must telegraph me on Tuesday or Wednesday a few words to say how you feel that you are getting on. And of course you will telegraph me at the end of the fight.

"I shall rejoice greatly, very greatly, if you succeed; and I know that you will take a good place, if not *the* best; high, if not the highest. And I shall feel delighted and thankful if you come out in the second, or third, or fourth rank.

"That God may bless you, and be ever near you and with you, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate father,

"J. Y. Simpson.

"*P.S.*—Mamma, Willie, Magnus, Eve send you all their *very* best wishes."

The student did not disappoint his father's sanguine anticipations.

In the *Medical Times* of January 1, 1870, there appeared a communication from Sir James, entitled "Therapeutic Note on Chloral." Other than intrinsic interest attaches to this. Its use in medical practice may be regarded as the fulfilment of an anticipation he ventured to express so early as 1853, when he delivered the Presidential Address to the Edinburgh Medico-Chirurgical Society.

On the 3d of January he addressed his first communication to Dr. Bigelow, senior, in answer to a letter published by him at Boston, U.S., on the History of Anæsthetics in America and in this country. The second communication was written in April following. Both of these have already been noticed under Anæsthesia. The letters were published separately in America. On receipt of the first, his intimate and attached friend, Dr. Horatio R. Storer of Boston, wrote :—

"My dear Professor,—Your letter is in type, and will be very extensively circulated. It was needed, for more reasons than one. . . . Your letter has found me in great trouble. . . . Of our own strength we cannot bear such loads. You will recollect me as an Unitarian. That has all passed. I should have else been broken. Now, I find at the foot of the Cross a peace and comfort and hope of which I never even dreamed. I think of my darling little Jessie Simpson, who would have so rejoiced my heart had she been spared, and I bless Him who took back to Himself what He had given. And if my boy must too be called, I can resign him to the sheltering arms of the dear Saviour, through whom alone we have eternal life. When your great trials came, my heart was stirred with profound sympathy, but I felt, when I recollected your words, that you had hold of the Father's hand. I can only pray for the same all-sufficient grace. . . . Ever yours sincerely,

"Horatio R. Storer."

The opening year brought with it to Sir James increased demands for thought and effort. But while he undertook earnestly whatever came to his hand, it was clear to Lady Simpson and his familiar friends that he was more easily "knocked up," as he said, than he used to be. He complained of fatigue more readily. Night-watching by the bed of a patient, and night-journeying to reach one, brought with them a sense of weariness to which he had hitherto been a stranger. No wonder! The professional practice, of which the reader has had frequent glimpses in the course of this narrative, was more

than any one man could get through without injury to health. It was enough to tax the highest effort and energy of several men. But, as if he was determined to light life's taper at both ends, he accomplished a vast amount of literary work at the same time. Some of the most important of his writings have recently been re-edited.[1] Besides these, there are pamphlets, papers, outlines of lectures, religious addresses, and religious tracts, sufficient in themselves to win for any man a fair place in authorship :

> "—— not on downy plumes, nor under shade
> Of canopy reposing, fame is won."

In the course of this narrative pretty full notices of Sir James's archæological writings, and references to his medical papers, have been given. I have not, however, dwelt much on the latter, chiefly because the Memoir is designed for general reading, and also because the works now referred to are easily accessible to medical students and practitioners. An analysis or even a general outline, of their contents, would necessarily be purely technical, and interesting only to the medical profession. Sir James was a man of general culture, a philanthropist, an archæologist, but, above all, he was a physician, and he ever felt that all his other attainments bore their highest fruits when they gave prominence to his work and standing as a medical man. Accordingly his purely professional writings must ever constitute his chief title to distinction as an author, and to them the reader is referred for the full record of Sir James's discoveries as a scientific physician, and for full illus-

[1] *The Obstetric Memoirs and Contributions of J. Y. Simpson, M.D., F.R.S.E.* Edited by N. O. Priestley, M.D., and Horatio R. Storer. 2 vols. Edinburgh, 1856. *Homœopathy.* 1 vol. Edinburgh, 1853. *Acupressure.* 1 vol. Edinburgh, 1864. *Selected Obstetrical Works.* Edited by J. Watt Black, M.D. 1 vol. Edinburgh, 1871. *Anæsthesia and Hospitalism.* Edited by Sir Walter G. Simpson, Bart., B.A. 1 vol. Edinburgh, 1871. *Clinical Lectures on the Diseases of Women.* Edited by Alexander Simpson, M.D., Professor of Midwifery, University of Edinburgh. 1 vol. Edinburgh, 1872. *Archaic Sculpturings of Cups, Circles, etc., on Stones in Scotland, England, and other Countries.* 1 vol. Edinburgh, 1867. *Archæological Essays.* Edited by John Stuart, LL.D. 2 vols. Edinburgh, 1872.

tration of the new methods of treatment introduced by him into medical practice.

On Friday, February 11, 1870, Sir James was summoned to London to give evidence in a celebrated divorce case. At midnight, after he had left Edinburgh, a telegram arrived at Queen Street announcing the postponement of the trial till Wednesday the 16th. He hastened home on the 14th, paid several visits to patients in the country, returned to London on the 15th, and was examined as a witness for the lady on the day following.

He left London the next day. Stopping at York, he dined at Lord Houghton's, and afterwards called at the house of his friend Dr. Williams in Micklegate about 11 P.M. "He spoke," says Miss Williams, "of Dr. Hanna and other Edinburgh friends. When my father and Mr. Keyworth came into the room he conversed with great animation on the medical questions of the day."

I chanced to call at Queen Street on the morning of the 18th. He was looking ill. "You must be very tired!" I said. "Yes. I suffered an awful amount of pain last night, and was glad to rest for awhile on the floor of the railway-carriage." Soon he began to look fresh and vigorous, and gave a most animated account of the trial—instancing other cases of puerperal insanity besides the example given in his evidence. Work went on as usual. A few days after he was called to Perth to see a patient. On his return he felt fatigued and weary, and on the 25th took to bed. The tidings of his illness sped fast and far. As one said—"'The WORLD is praying for him.' As far as the telegraph-wire has penetrated, wherever an English mail had time to reach praying men and women, in every language there was prayer. . . . But prayer could not keep him here."[1] The assurance of this general interest in the issue of his sickness cheered and comforted him, and helped him to that highest attainment of the soul—implicit trust.

[1] *Golden Vials Filled.*

In March he was able to write to Magnus, then at Geneva:

"EDINBURGH, 18*th March* 1867.

"MY OWN DEAR MAGNUS,—This is the first letter I have tried to write sitting up. Perhaps it may not be very legible or long, as I feel very weak, and not very able to exert my pen. But I am anxious to say how happy I feel when your letters come, and tell us all that you are well and not disliking, if not yet entirely liking, Geneva. Have a brave and stout heart for it. The longer I have lived, the more I have regretted the state of my knowledge of spoken French, German, etc.; and in all professions the knowledge of languages every day becomes more and more indispensable, because the *new* discoveries and disquisitions on them must be read in various languages to enable those running in the race to keep up the required pace.

"Eve wrote you a few days ago wondering (for me) if there were any cup-markings or cups and circles (such as I wrote a book about two years ago) cut in the curious islet rock in the lake, and which was the seat, if I recollect aright, of some Roman or ante-Roman pagan worship. If you are ever on this little rock island, look for the cups, or cups and circles.

"Mr. Pender and I talked some weeks ago of going to Holland or elsewhere next month. But I have little or no chance of getting back sufficient strength to travel. My fancy was to go to Spain, and I have read numbers of books upon Spain since I lay down. There must be many old Druidical and prehistoric stones there, but nobody seems to note them or care for them. Eve has been my kind nurse of late.

"I have telegraphed for Walter to-day, as I think he should be here and near me at present; for at times I feel very, very ill indeed, as if I should soon be called away. My sole and whole trust is in the love and work of Christ—as my all-sufficient Sin-bearer and Saviour—my Creator as well as my Redeemer.

"Let me add how happy you have ever made me, and how dearly and deeply I love you.—Yours ever affectionately,

"J. Y. SIMPSON.

"*Sunday.*—Walter has come. Dr. Wood thinks me much better. I will write you very soon again, as I get stronger.

"J. Y. S."

Some of the notes of personal experience which follow are introduced after much consideration. Many readers may think that they make public what strangers have no claim to know; but others may find quickening and strength in the illustrations of the love and faithfulness of God in Christ which they supply. Besides, he had himself spoken often and freely in public of God's ways with him, and this record would be incomplete were we to omit to notice his feelings, as he lay consciously on the threshold of the eternal and the unseen.

"I saw him," says his nephew Mr. Robert Simpson, W.S.,[1] "very often, and spent much of my spare time with him. It was always delightful to be with him in health or in sickness, but especially so during his last illness. His wonderful kindness and his intense interest in the welfare of all whom he loved were most marked. On a Saturday evening I spent three or four hours with him. He spoke of his letter, appended to Dr. Hanna's work, on the Physical Cause of Christ's death, and said he would like to make some correction on it."[2]

In the intervals of relief from suffering he heartily busied himself with the interests of his profession, or with the works

[1] Most of the notices of sick-room experiences that follow are *abridged* from Mr. R. R. Simpson's notes.

[2] "Did Christ die of a Broken Heart?" is the title of the letter appended to Dr. Hanna's work, *The Last Day of our Lord's Passion.* The correction was not, as the author of *Golden Vials Filled* has said, "to point out that the blood which the spear drew from our Saviour's side was dead blood." This he had clearly stated in the letter itself. I had occasion to know that he was beginning to doubt the expediency even of speaking of "the physical cause of Christ's death." He had been struck with the questions,—"If the heart was ruptured under the load of sorrow, would not that have implied defect in the 'body prepared' for Him? Then have we not the complete explanation in John x. 17, 18?—'Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.'"

which members of the household had on hand. He spoke to his nephew Robert about his business prospects, went over a school-exercise with Eva, talked of the Carrubber's Close Mission, of Christian work in Rome and in Spain,—"Were I to recover, I would like to visit Spain to look at its antiquities,"—of the interests of the Edinburgh Industrial Brigade, and Sabbath-school work. In the beginning of April a bed was prepared for him in the back drawing-room. The notes which follow are for the most part purely religious. But throughout his last illness he talked freely and frequently of all the subjects that had occupied his attention when in health. Even when he wrote the last letter to Dr. Bigelow (p. 236) the conviction was growing in his mind that he was dying. After the letter was finished he became too weak to read long himself. When he did so it was some short story. But he had Froude's History read to him at intervals, and often stopped the reader, asking him to go in search of some book in which he remembered some passage verifying or confuting Froude's statements. He talked of Medicine, Archæology, and Hospitalism. He went back on his monograph, "*The Cat-Stane*," and explained new points he would have liked to introduce. "I would have liked to complete *Hospitalism*, but I hope some good man will take it up." "How old am I?" he said one morning. "Fifty-nine? Well, I have done some work. I wish I had been busier." "Chat away," he would often say pleasantly to those around him, when his breathlessness kept him from speaking,—"chat away. It cheers me up, and keeps me from sleeping." "It was a wonderful sick-room," says one. "I could not have believed it possible that any man could have attained to such familiarity with the thought of death and eternity."

"*April* 3.—Spent the whole day with uncle. Told him I was going to address the lads of the Industrial Brigade, in whom he took a deep interest, in the evening. 'What is your subject?' 'Out of the heart are the issues of life.' He ex-

plained to me ossification of the heart, and showed how I might illustrate my subject by it. Aunt Jessie read part of the story of 'Orfie Sibbald,' with which he was charmed, and asked me to send a copy to Miss Williams of York, an intimate personal friend. He had it read to him chapter by chapter. *April* 6.—Spoke to me with great calmness, as if he would not live long, and asked me to write a codicil to his will. When the codicil was signed he was greatly relieved, and began to speak of his spiritual concerns. He said—'I have not lived so near to Christ as I desired to do. I have had a busy life, but have not given so much time to eternal things as I should have sought. Yet I know it is not my merit I am to trust to for eternal life. Christ is all.' Then he added with a sigh, 'I have not got far on in the divine life.' I said we are complete in Him. 'Yes, that's it,' he replied with a smile. 'The hymn expresses my thoughts,—

> "Just as I am, without one plea,
> But that Thy blood was shed for me."

I *so* like that hymn.' He spoke of not having a mind for Theology. 'I like the plain simple Gospel truth, and don't care to go into questions beyond that.' He spoke most tenderly of all his family, naming each. He seemed much concerned about Eva, and asked me to write to Mrs. Hoyes, Ainslie Place, Mrs. Close, Killeny Castle, and Mrs. Ainsworth about her. Wished Mr. M'Kie, advocate, to get some memento of him as a mark of his friendship, and that Mr. Imlach should get books. He desired that his tracts on Hospitalism should be published together, and expressed great regret at his inability to complete this work. I mentioned the subject of Spurgeon's sermon—'When they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save *Jesus only,* with themselves.' 'Will you read it to me?' As I read part of it he was suffering a good deal, but his face at times lit up with animation, as he said, 'That's nice. Read it again.' He spoke of Alick with much affection. Thought he should become a candidate for the Chair, although at first it might be a pecuniary sacrifice to him.

'Of course —— will be a candidate. He would seek to reverse my treatment. Alick would help to perpetuate it. *April* 10.—Before leaving for the Sabbath-school, I went to say good-night. 'Come back,' he said, 'and stay all night. I do not think I shall be long here, and I should like you to remain to the end. From extreme pain I have not been able to read or even to think much to-day, but when I think it is of the words "Jesus only," and really that is all that is needed, is it not?—"Jesus only?"' On my return he said, 'I've been telling Eve and all of them about "Jesus only." Will you read a hymn?' I read 'Rock of Ages.' 'A beautiful hymn,' he remarked, 'but I like "Just as I am" best. Will you read it, please?' During the night, when in great suffering, he said, 'Repeat me some texts.' I quoted several verses from his favourite chapter, John xiv. Though he was very familiar with the words, they now seemed new to him. When I came to the verse, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life,' he said, 'What a wonderful redemption this is! Christ's blood can float a cork or a man-of-war. It can bear *every* one to heaven.' I quoted 1 Tim. i. 15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." 'Well may I make use of the words!' He then spoke with much enthusiasm of the atoning power of Christ's blood. More than once he said he wished it was all over, as he knew from the disease how much suffering was before him, but he bowed submissively to the will of God. In former illnesses he was sometimes fractious. There was nothing of this now. Jarvis, remarking this, said to Dr. Wood, 'he thought it was a bad sign.' He spoke with joy of being for ever with the Lord, and of the reunions of heaven. *April* 11.—Dr. Duns called. He told me he enjoyed the Dr.'s visit, but felt a remark he made about opium. 'As regards that,' he said, 'I am entirely in my doctor's hands.'"

During this visit I had some most interesting talk with Sir James. He told me I had come at a good time, "for though so

breathless, my mind is free from the opiates the doctors have been giving me." "We know not till we are tried," I said, "but I think I would face the pain and dispense with the opiate." I saw at once I had touched a tender point, and instantly remembering his views of the theory of the alleged therapeutic value of bearing pain, I added, "But the doctors know best." "Yes," he said, "I am entirely in their hands." We turned to more interesting themes—salvation, death, resurrection. "The passage in your last book," he said, "about the world being made by the hands that were nailed to the cross, has brought me much strength and comfort. It has stuck to me ever since I read it."[1] As we spoke, Lady Simpson withdrew into the window to weep. His eye followed, and he gazed on her for an instant, with a look of inexpressible anxiety and yearning tenderness. The simplicity of his trust in Christ was very striking. "It has happily come to this—I am a sinner needing a Saviour, and Jesus is the Saviour I need."

"He spoke of his unshaken confidence in Jesus," continues Mr. R. R. Simpson. "'I have mixed a great deal with men of all shades of opinion. I have heard men of science and philosophy raise doubts and objections to the Gospel of Christ, but I have never for one moment had a doubt myself since I believed.' I gave him a message from Mr. Jenkinson, for whom he had a great regard, 'To trust in the finished work of Christ.' 'That's it,' he said. 'That's what I desire to do.' I repeated a verse of a hymn [2] which Mr. Jenkinson gave me for

[1] The following is the passage to which he refers. It occurs in *Science and Christian Thought*. "These all, minutest as greatest, were the workmanship of Him whose hands on Calvary were nailed to the transom of the Roman cross."

[2] "The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of heaven breaks,
The summer morn I've sighed for,
The fair sweet morn awakes:
Dark, dark hath been the midnight,
But day-spring is at hand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land."

This beautiful hymn—*The Last Words of Samuel Rutherford*, by A. R. C. (Mrs. Cousin, Melrose)—was greatly liked by Sir James.

him. 'Repeat it again,' he said. 'Thank him for it. I should so like to get a shake of his hand again.' Read the last part of 'Jesus Only,' which greatly comforted him. On returning at 9.30, I found Dr. Andrew Wood, Dr. Moir, Dr. Coghill, Dr. Munro, Mr. Drummond, and Rev. Mr. Philip with him. Mr. Philip prayed with him. Rev. Mr. Morgan, for whom he had a great liking, had called. 'Mr. M.,' he said, 'told me to rest my head on Jesus' bosom as John did at the supper-table. I cannot just do that. I think it enough if I have hold of the hem of his garment.' Passages from 'Oliver Underwood,' 'Orfie Sibbald,' 'Yeddie's First and Last Sacrament,' and 'Little Will' were read to him. 'Little Will' is the simple story, in rhyme, of a boy's faith. It was told to him first by Dr. Park of Andover, and greatly pleased him. *April* 13.— Read John iii. When I came to the eighth verse, 'The wind bloweth where it listeth,' he said, 'That was the means of B. B.'s conversion.'"

The days glided past, often marked by much pain, but always by evidences of strength made perfect in weakness, and grace sufficient—grace abounding. There were meditations on Luke xv., John i. x. xiv., Rom. viii., Eph. ii. iii. iv. v., Isaiah liii. lv., 1 Cor. iii., Heb. xii., 1 Peter i. ii., and on Rev. xxii., as the city with the pearly gates, the golden streets, the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, and the throne of God and the Lamb was rising to his eye in ever-growing brightness. But before "entering in," the brother who had watched over him so tenderly in childhood, helped him in youth, and rejoiced in all the successes of his bright career, spent with him his last night but one on earth. He sat on the pillow with Sir James's head on his knee, on which he had been dandled in childhood, hearing ever and anon throughout that night's silent watching, the touching words, soft, and low, and slow, as if a weary sick child spoke, "Oh, Sandy, Sandy!" When the morning came Sir James was unconscious of all around; and on May 6 his spirit passed, with one great sigh, but without struggle or trace of pain, into the presence of God our Saviour.

CHAPTER XVI.

Tidings of Sir James's Death—Offer of a Grave in Westminster Abbey—Funeral—Funeral Sermons—Letter from Her Majesty the Queen—National Loss—Letters of Condolence—Verses "In Memoriam"—Minutes of Public Bodies—The End.

THE tidings of Sir James's death called forth everywhere expressions of the truest and deepest sorrow. His fame had grown world-wide. The affections of men had come to cluster round the Edinburgh Professor as God's gift, not to Britain only but to the human race. His name was revered wherever Christian philanthropy walked hand-in-hand with civilisation, and the high claims of the noblest of scientific professions were acknowledged. Shortly after the news of his death reached London, a proposal to honour him by interment in Westminster Abbey was originated and warmly taken up. At little more than a few hours' notice, a committee for promoting the object was formed, which included, with many others, the following names:—Sir William Fergusson, Dr. Gull, Dr. Sibson, Dr. Stewart, Dr. Risdon Bennet, Dr. Peacock, Mr. Cock, Mr. Hilton, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Simon, Dr. Davies, Dr. Andrew Clark, Dr. Sutton, Dr. Sieveking, Dr. Little, Dr. Garrod, Mr. Flower, Dr. Priestley, Mr. Spencer Wells, Mr. H. Lee, and Mr. Hutchinson. The Dean of Westminster was applied to, and at once cordially took up the proposal. "It is," says Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson, one of the promoters, "with great pleasure that I have to add that the Dean of Westminster, in reply to a private

inquiry (through Mr. Flower) made on Monday, stated, with the utmost kindness, that he should at once accede to the proposal, and made suggestions as to the details."

On the 10th, Dr. Begbie received the following telegram,—"Could you ascertain whether a public funeral in Westminster Abbey for Sir James Simpson would be agreeable to his family and friends? Permission has been granted." The family appreciated very highly the offer of this rare honour, but, knowing Sir James's own wish to be buried in Warriston Cemetery, they decided to decline the proposal. The funeral took place on the afternoon of Friday, May 13th.

Never before, nor since, has Edinburgh witnessed such a public funeral. It was computed that more than thirty thousand persons were present, either as taking part in the procession or as spectators. Many were there even from distant parts of the country. Scotland mourned the loss of one of her greatest sons, Edinburgh, her chief citizen. "Throughout the day flags floated half-mast high from the City Chambers and other prominent positions. The University closed its class-rooms at noon. The Stock Exchange suspended its transactions. Indeed, as the hour appointed for the funeral approached, the general business of the city was brought to a pause, and for a time some of our busiest streets wore an aspect of impressive stillness. The bells of St. Giles's and other churches sent forth a solemn funeral note; and altogether there was presented the impressive spectacle of a great community doing a last act of homage to departed genius and worth."[1]

[1] The following public bodies joined the procession :—Students, the Public, Granton Literary Association, Philosophical Institution, the Chamber of Commerce, the Merchant Company, Solicitors before the Supreme Court, Writers to the Signet, Advocates, Kirk-Session and Deacons of Free St. John's Church, United Presbyterian Synod, Free Church Presbytery, Established Presbytery, Rector and Masters of High School, Principal and Professors of Veterinary College, Edinburgh Geological Society, Botanical Society, Society of Arts, Society of Antiquaries, Royal Scottish Academy, Royal Society, Royal Medical Society, Pharmaceutical Society, Medico-Chirurgical Society, Obstetrical Society, College of Surgeons, College of Physicians,

As the procession proceeded towards Warriston, the hushed solemnity of the dense crowd of spectators through which it moved was most impressive. Tears streamed down many cheeks, and frequently sobs, as from hearts bearing a deep personal sorrow, fell on the ear. In the crowd were many whose dress and appearance indicated great poverty. They had evidently come from the poorest districts of the city. At the corner of Cumberland Street two blind men had taken their place to listen to the measured tramp of that great company as it passed, bearing on their countenances a look of deep solemnity and sadness. Not only had Bathgate sent its Town Council, but many from the town and surrounding district were present. "It's a sair day for Bathgate this," said one who had been at school with Sir James.

Letters of condolence from all ranks and from all parts of the country began to reach 52 Queen Street immediately after Sir James's death, and they continued to be received for many months. In almost every case the writers refer to his death as a great public calamity. The gracious message of her Majesty the Queen was received with heartfelt gratitude. It was conveyed by His Grace the Duke of Argyll to Sir Walter G. Simpson :—

"SIR,—I have received an order from her Majesty the Queen to convey to the family of Sir J. Simpson the expression of her Majesty's warmest sympathy in the loss they have sustained, and an expression also of her Majesty's own sorrow on account of the loss which the country has sustained in the death of so great and so good a man. I now obey her Majesty's commands. And I need hardly add, on behalf of the Duchess and myself, that we both mourn the loss of a very dear personal friend.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant, ARGYLL."

Senatus and Office-Bearers of the University, Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council, Office-Bearers of High Constables, Town Council of Leith, Town Council of Portobello, Town Council of Bathgate, the General Body of High Constables, Directors of Briton Medical Assurance Society.

The perusal of the letters of condolence has not been an unpleasant task. They reveal so many old ties of affection hastening to cluster around the memory of Sir James. They show how fast his friendships had been, how quickly he bound men to him in love, and how deep was the gratitude of his patients. Then they are all so full of heart. The following, taken almost at random, are introduced as specimens,—"It is," writes Sir James's old friend, Dr. Storrar, London, "an oppressing heartache to think I have lost such an affectionate friend. We were neither boys nor students together, and, indeed, our lot and sphere of work were different and far apart. Yet from the morning we first met in the late Dr. John Thomson's library, in 1833, we have been fast friends, and have ever hailed each other when we came together with the affection of kinship." Another fellow-student writes to his brother as follows :—

"Ravensdowne,
"Berwick-on-Tweed, *May 6th*, 1870.

"My dear David,—I have your sad letter—for sad it is to lose such a man. I indorse every word you say of him, and have, as is natural, many additional reasons for remembering his kindness professionally. Last time I saw him was at Mrs. Scott's death-bed; I was watching her all night, and could hardly persuade him even to take an hour's rest, so we sat and talked all night long on various matters. He was a true *genius*. It may be easy enough to get as efficient a Professor, but the like man is not left in the University. I shall miss him in many ways—books which he sent me, besides professional advice, and visits here now and then, often carrying me back to the old days of John Thomson, for he so often called me by my Christian name, as in those days.

"One feels in such a case as his how much of the sadness of the loss is removed by his gain.—Ever affectionately yours,

"P. W. Maclagan."

"27 Inverleith Row, *7th May* 1870.

"My dear Lady Simpson,—Mrs. Balfour and I desire most

deeply and sincerely to sympathize with you in your overwhelming bereavement. It is indeed a sad trial, under which you and your family can only be supported by strength from above.

"By the death of your dear husband I feel that I have lost one of my earliest medical friends, to whom I and my family are indebted for many kind services.

"I rejoiced in the eminent position which he had attained, and I looked forward to many more years of pleasant and profitable intercourse.

"God has willed it otherwise, and we must bow in submission.

"To your dear husband the change has been a happy one. He trusted in Christ, and has gone to be for ever with the Lord, where there is no more sorrow or sighing.

"I pray earnestly that you may be enabled to commit yourself and family to the keeping of Him who is the Husband of the widow and the Father of the fatherless.

"Accept our sincere condolence, and believe me yours truly,

"J. H. Balfour."

"My dear Lady Simpson," says Dr. Halliday Douglas, writing on May 7,—"This is no time to intrude upon you, but I cannot allow this day to pass without sending you the assurance of my heartfelt sympathy. Sir James's removal is an unspeakable sorrow to many, though to none such as it is to you. Still it may be a solace to you to know that so many mourn with you; but the great consolation to you, and to all who can receive it, is, that he had been taught to rejoice in our risen Saviour. The Lord did great things by Sir James's active life, He may do much by his unlooked-for death."

"4 Queensberry Place, South Kensington,
11*th May* 1870.

"My dear Simpson,—'Sir James Simpson's death is a grievous loss to the nation: it is truly a national concern.'

"These are the words which Mr. Gladstone addressed to me in the lobby of the House of Commons last night. . . .

"I need not say how all here sympathize deeply with the affliction of yourself and family.—Yours sincerely,

"LYON PLAYFAIR."

"I deeply sympathize with you," says Mr. Duncan M'Laren, M.P., "in the great loss you have all sustained, and in the loss which the city of Edinburgh, in all its aspects, has sustained by his decease; for his name and fame shed lustre on our University and on the city."

"HOTEL DE FRANCE, PAU, *May 9th*, 1870.—*Monday.*

"DEAREST LADY SIMPSON,—We are bitterly sorry to be abroad to-day when the terrible news has come to us. We could not bring ourselves to believe that it was to come. We cannot have any letter till to-morrow afternoon (as there is no mail to-day), but it is in *Galignani's* telegram.

"For *him* indeed we do rejoice, while we are left in tears to wonder how the world is ever to go on without him. It is a universal mourning, and many a prayer is going up for you.

"It seems impossible to realize that that loved voice is silent now. It is the first very heavy trial I have ever had. I cannot let the day pass without writing this expression of our deep sorrow for you and yours.—Your affectionate

"MARGO."

"ROME, *May* 22, 1870.

"MY DEAR LADY SIMPSON,—In the midst of my own grief you will, I am sure, believe the sincere sorrow and distress with which I received the announcement of the death of our dear Sir James. I cannot express to you how much I feel the loss of so great and true a friend, nor the deep regret I have heard here expressed in Rome; it is a truly national calamity, and will be ever felt so by those who, like myself and my dear wife, reverenced his genius, were honoured with his friendship, and indebted to him for many, many kindnesses which we could never hope to repay. I can only beg you to accept my most

sincere sympathy and condolence in your great bereavement.—And believe me, dear Lady Simpson, faithfully yours,

"KEELEY HALSWELLE."

"CHEAPINGHAVEN, DENMARK, *May* 24, 1870.

"MY DEAR LADY SIMPSON,—I have purposely allowed some few days to go by before writing these lines—lines of sympathy and condolement on the great loss which has befallen not only yourself and family—but so many, many admiring and attached friends all the world over. Truly a Prince has fallen in our Israel! But we must not repine. He has gone a little before us to our common Lord and Father, and He who called him just now doeth all things well. Indeed, we ought to be doubly thankful, *first*, that he was given to us at all, and *then* that we had him so long. His memory shall remain among us, the glory of his country and the boast of his friends. . . . Believe me, with great respect, yours very gratefully,

"GEORGE STEPHENS."

"HOTEL, PELHAM, 23*d May* 1870.

"MY DEAR LADY SIMPSON,—Your son's telegram of the 6th inst., conveying the sad tidings of your dear husband's death, reached me at Washington, where I had been attending the session of the American Medical Association, then just ended. Appropriate measures were at once taken to testify to the national sense of loss and sympathy, the newspaper account of which I have sent you, and of which you will also duly receive a formal and certified copy through the British Minister to this country.

"Upon returning home, a Memorial Meeting of the Gynæcological Society of Boston, of which your husband had been the first honorary member, was convened. It was of the most solemn and impressive character—testifying to the sincerest and most heartfelt grief of men, who every one of them felt, though some of them had never seen him, that they had lost a personal friend. You will receive copies of the papers containing an account of this meeting, and of the June number of

the Society's Journal, in which it will also appear. . . . With sincere sympathy, HORATIO R. STORER."

"BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, U.S., 16*th May* 1870.

"MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—The cable brought to this country a few days ago the afflicting tidings of your father's death. We were in some degree prepared for it by letters from home, received about a week before. I can truly say that ever since these sad letters gave us the premonition of what was coming, your family, and especially your father, was very much in my thoughts, and I cannot tell you how much I felt when the telegraphic announcement met my eye in the newspaper. I cannot refrain from writing to you this brief expression of sympathy and Christian interest in the season of your affliction. Your father was very widely known in this country, and when I alluded to his death this day week at a public meeting in Petersburg, near Richmond, Virginia, I could readily gather from the look of the people how much they were concerned and surprised, and how they felt that a light had been extinguished in the firmament. . . . Ever yours very truly,

"W. G. BLAIKIE."

On Sabbath, 15th May, sermons were preached in St. John's Free Church, of which he was a member. Reference was also made to Sir James's death in most of the Edinburgh pulpits, and in many throughout the country. On the evening of the same day special services were held in the Free Church Assembly Hall, which was densely crowded on the occasion.

In early numbers of several of the illustrated periodicals portraits of Sir James and notices of his career were given. Verses *In Memoriam* appeared in journals and newspapers; others were printed separately, or forwarded in MS. to Queen Street. Sydney Dobell, A.R.C., Dr. Symonds of Clifton, and others, not unknown, hung chaplets on his tomb. As to the last named, the editor of the *Lancet* says:—"An accomplished correspondent, whose initals will be at once recognised by scholars of the profession, sends the following:—

"PROMETHEUS.

(*Our lamented Sir James Simpson was the subject of Angina Pectoris.*)

I.

"'Ah me! alas! pain, pain, ever, for ever!'
So groaned upon his rock that Titan good,
Who by his brave and loving hardihood
Was to weak man of priceless boons the giver,
Which e'en the supreme tyrant could not sever
From us, once given; we own him in our food
And in our blazing hearth's beatitude;
Yet still his cry was 'Pain, ever, for ever!'

Shall we a later, harder doom rehearse?
One came whose art men's dread of art repressed;
Mangled and writhing limbs he lulled to rest,
And stingless left the old Semitic curse;
Him, too, for these blest gifts did Zeus amerce?
He, too, had vultures tearing at his breast.

II.

Hush! Pagan plaints, our Titan is unbound;
The cruel beak and talons seared away;
As once upon his mother's lap he lay,
So rests his head august on holy ground;
Spells stronger than his own his pangs have found;
He hears no clamour of polemic fray,
Nor recks he what unthankful men may say;
Nothing can vex him in that peace profound.

And where his loving soul, his genius bold?
In slumber? or already sent abroad
On angel's wings and works, as some men hold?
Or waiting Evolution's change, unawed?
All is a mystery, as Saint Paul has told,
Saying: 'Your life is hid with Christ in God.'

Clifton, *May 13th*, 1870. J. A. S., M.D."

There are also seventeen exceedingly touching stanzas by one of his colleagues, Dr. Stevenson.[1]

. . . . . .

[1] "Great in his art, and peerless in resource,
He strove the fiend of human pain to quell;
Nor ever champion dared so bold a course
With truer heart, or weapons proved so well.

Yet greater was he in his own great soul,
A brimful fount of pity, warm and pure,—
Which, as the quiv'ring needle for its pole,
Panted to soothe the pains it could not cure.

In less than a month, between forty and fifty notices of Sir James's Life appeared in Britain. In America and on the Continent there were as many more. Public bodies hastened to transmit to Lady Simpson minutes expressing their sense of the loss sustained by his death. I give only two here :[1]—

EXTRACT from MINUTE of MEETING of Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh, of date 27th May 1870.

"The Senatus Academicus, on this first occasion of their meeting since the funeral of the late Professor Sir James Young Simpson, Bart., resolve to record their admiration of his genius, and of the benefits which he has conferred upon mankind by his discoveries.

"They resolve also to record their high appreciation of the ability and energy with which Professor Sir James Y. Simpson, during a period of thirty years, conducted the classes of Midwifery, of the lustre which his name conferred upon the University, and of the great loss which the University has sustained by his untimely death.

"And the Senatus further resolve to transmit a copy of this resolution, along with the expression of their sincere regret, to Lady Simpson and his family.

"Extracted by JOHN WILSON,
Sec. Senat. Acad.

"EDINBURGH, 3*d June* 1870."

On such emprise his ardent heart was bent
While, walking by faith's holy light, he trod
The Shepherd's path, with tears and blood besprent,
Which leads the flock up to the hills of God!"

. . . . . .

[1] Extract minutes were also transmitted from the records of the United Presbyterian Synod, the Royal College of Physicians, the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, King and Queen's College of Physicians Ireland, Royal Scottish Academy, the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the Botanical Society of Edinburgh, the Obstetrical Societies of London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, the Liverpool Medical Institution, the Bathgate Town Council, etc.

FROM THE RECORDS OF THE FREE CHURCH GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

"It is not the province of this Assembly to record the matchless services rendered to science by Sir James Simpson; while at the same time it desires gratefully to remember the unspeakable blessings which some of his achievements have conferred upon our sick and suffering humanity.

"It is becoming, however, in the Church of which he was a member, and to which he was warmly attached, to whose ministers and their families he was ever, amidst all his labours, a loving and ready adviser in days of weakness, to recall his unselfish services in the interests of all that affected the wellbeing of our race; his spirit of generous liberality to the poor and needy; his willing submission of the great gifts with which God had intrusted him, to the honour and glory of Him who gave them; and his simple trust, as he entered the dark valley, in Jesus as the Saviour of sinners. The Church in its Supreme Court records its sympathy with the marvellous tribute paid by a mourning community on the day of his funeral, and to bless the Lord, who made him not only a man of genius, but a man of grace.

"The Assembly desires to express its condolence with his widow and family, and to commend them to the loving care of the Good Shepherd." [1]

On the 30th May a public meeting was convened in Edinburgh, to consider what steps should be taken for a public memorial of Sir James. The Right Hon. the Earl of Dalhousie presided, and many of the leading medical men and citizens of Edinburgh were present. Resolutions were moved by the Lord Provost, Principal Sir Alexander Grant, Dr. Alexander Wood, Sir William Gibson Craig, and Sir George Harvey. The resolutions were adopted unanimously, and a Provisional Committee was appointed, consisting of the Earl of Dalhousie, chairman; the Right Hon. Lord Rosehill, Hon. George Waldegrave

[1] Drawn up by David Maclagan, Esq.

Leslie, Sir George Warrender of Lochend, Bart., and Edward S. Gordon, Q.C., M.P., Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, as vice-chairmen; Dr. Alexander Wood and Councillor Colston, as honorary secretaries; and W. J. Duncan, Esq., manager of the National Bank, as honorary treasurer. A monument, or a public hospital, with a tablet to his memory in Westminster Abbey, were the objects proposed. A short time afterwards an important meeting was held at Stafford House, London, the residence of the Duke of Sutherland, and a committee was appointed to co-operate with the Edinburgh one. Subscriptions at once began to come in rapidly.

In this record of Sir James Simpson's life, an earnest attempt has been made to present a true view of his intellectual and moral qualities, and faithfully to describe what he set himself to achieve, and what he achieved. The insatiable thirst for knowledge which distinguished him in boyhood continued through life. Born in a condition, and in early years surrounded with circumstances little favourable to intellectual pursuits, a strong will, steady self-reliance, and singular industry enabled him to surmount every obstacle and climb to high social position and world-wide celebrity, as physician, philanthropist, and man of science. In that branch of a noble profession to which he chiefly devoted his genius, talents, and highest energies—a branch in which even great skill fails, if dissociated from high moral tone—his almost maidenly delicacy of taste and feeling drew to him the love and trust of the most gentle and refined. True manliness and deep tenderness have seldom been more perfectly combined than in his person. It was not unfrequently his lot, as it has been the lot of most men who have raised themselves to high place, to be entangled in controversy :

> "Sæpius ventis agitatur ingens
> Pinus."

When he deliberately took up a position, he held it with

vigorous determination against all comers, and made his assailants feel the weight of his blows. In such circumstances no considerations could influence him till he had secured, what he believed to be, the triumph of truth. But he disliked controversy, and no sooner had an opponent given way than he expressed his willingness to forgive and forget. More than once he showed his readiness to do battle for a bitter enemy who for the time was upholding the honour of his profession, or the interests and dignity of science. In the last years of his active usefulness, and when in the very bloom and vigour of his faculties, Sir James lived as an earnest, devoted, and humble Christian, feeling it ever to be the crown and glory of his life that he could sincerely and joyfully say, "It pleased God, who called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me."

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